

## BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Elizabeth Kimura

Elizabeth Kimura was born in Waimea on the Big Island, January 24, 1921. The second oldest of eleven children, she is the daughter of Eliza Purdy Lindsey and long-time Parker Ranch cowboy John Kawanānakoā Lindsey. She attended Waimea Public School and graduated from Kohala High School in 1940.

In June 1941 she married Hisao Kimura, who worked for Parker Ranch throughout his career. In 1944, she began working for Mutual Telephone Company as an operator and stayed with the phone company until 1957. During the war, the military monitored all phone calls and the operators were under strict instructions not to carry on any unnecessary conversations.

After leaving the phone company, she worked for two years at the Parker Ranch Store, followed by about seven years at the Parker Ranch Dispensary as a secretary, and five years at the Mauna Loa Observatory where she did general office work. In 1974 she began working for Kawamata Farms and does so to this day.

She has two daughters and three sons.

Tape No. 22-98-1-93 and 22-99-1-93

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Elizabeth Kimura (EK)

August 13, 1993

Waimea, Hawai'i

BY: Holly Yamada (HY)

HY: This is an interview with Elizabeth Kimura at her home, in Waimea, on the Big Island, August 13, 1993. The interviewer is Holly Yamada.

Let's start with when and where you were born?

EK: Oh, when and where. I was born in Waimea, Hawai'i. And I need to give the date?

HY: Yeah. When were you born?

EK: January 24, 1921, in Waimea, Hawai'i.

HY: And what about your parents?

EK: My father was born here, and my mother was born in Kona, North Kona—(Kīholo Beach).

HY: And your father is . . .

EK: My father is John Kawānanakoa Lindsey. And he was born here, but his grandfather [EK's great-grandfather, John K. Lindsey's grandfather] came from England.

HY: That's the Lindsey . . .

EK: That's how the Lindsey family started. Yeah. He came here and he married a local girl—(part-)Hawaiian girl. And, well, the first Lindsey that arrived in Waimea, was Thomas (John) Weston Lindsey. And he came here on board ship. (The British named it the *Collingwood*.) They were sent here by the British (navy to look after the interests of British citizens).

(Thomas John Weston) was about twenty years old. He met this girl, Mary (Kaala) Fay, who was a student at St. Andrew[s] Priory. And because he was not a citizen of the [Kingdom of] Hawai'i or the United States, he couldn't get married to her on land, so, they had to get married---married about three miles out of Honolulu on board the boat that he came in on. So, that was the first Lindsey that came to Hawai'i.

And she bore my father's father, which is my grandfather. Then when he found out that he was terminally ill, he went back to England and sent his younger brother to come and marry his wife, and to take care of this little boy that he had.

(Telephone rings.)

HY: You need to answer the phone?

EK: Yeah.

HY: Okay.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

EK: When he found out he was terminally ill, I assume it must of been cancer or something. He didn't say in his story. So, he went back to England, and sent his younger brother to come out here and take care of his little boy, who was maybe two years old.

HY: So, you're saying that the brother . . .

EK: (George Kyngston Lindsey arrived in Hawai'i about 1840 to comply with his brother's wishes.) Two brothers married one woman.

HY: Oh, I see.

EK: When he [Thomas John Weston Lindsey] (left), he had one son. So, he sent his brother over to marry his wife, and take care of this little boy. So, the second brother came, and with the same wife, that's when the Lindsey family exploded.

(Laughter)

EK: In fact from him [Thomas John Weston Lindsey], we [came from] just one son—that's my father's father. And out of--from his marriage to my grandmother, he had about ten (children). And my father was the third in the family of ten.

HY: And did they live here . . .

EK: All lived here. They all lived in Waimea. Down the road, it used to be called the Waiaka Estate, but it's now called the Dahlberg Estate. If you notice---did you come up from Kawaihae?

HY: Yes.

EK: There's a bridge with the river running, and . . .

HY: Small, little bridge.

EK: Yeah. It's right in that area there.

HY: They lived in that area?

EK: They lived down there. And my father was only thirteen years old when he started working for the ranch [Parker Ranch]. He hated school. That's why he never learned to speak English. Yeah. He (speaks) mostly Hawaiian, but he speaks broken English, and he kind of understands us when we talk to him in English.

HY: All his business was conducted in Hawaiian at Parker Ranch?

EK: Hawaiian. He was the head cowboy foreman for number of years. So, all his cowboys under him, all learned to speak Hawaiian, too. We had Japanese, and we had Portuguese, mostly Hawaiian boys worked as cowboys.

HY: Did he conduct his business with A. W. [Alfred Wellington] Carter [b.1867–d.1949, longtime manager of Parker Ranch] in Hawaiian as well?

EK: He was very sharp, you know, in his mind. He would count the cattle. And he had no. . . . He doesn't know how to write, so, everything was kept in his mind. And if anything needed to go down on paper, he would have one of the boys do it for him. You know, get the count of the cattle (in different pastures), and how many here, and how many there.

HY: What about the Kawānanakoa side?

EK: That was a name (given to him by his mother). There's no relationship between the Kawānanakoa family and the . . .

HY: The David---Prince [David Kawānanakoa]?

EK: Yeah. No relation.

HY: Oh, okay.

EK: (Coughs) Oh, it's going to be recorded.

HY: Oh, that's okay. Tell me if you need to break or something.

EK: No, I think I better get me a cup of water.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

HY: So, you were saying that the Kawānanakoa side is . . .

EK: He was just named that, you know, his Hawaiian name was Kawānanakoa. But it's no relation to the Kawānanakoas in Honolulu.

HY: Oh, I see.

EK: Mm hmm [yes].



HY: What about the Lindsey that married---the second brother, that married the Hawaiian woman?

EK: Yeah, yeah. Mary Fay. That was the same woman (who married two brothers). She had about, I think, (ten) children. And that's why, when we talk about the Lindsey family, we always say, "Well, I come from the first Lindsey, you come from the second Lindsey." That's the way we . . .

HY: Oh, I see.

EK: Yeah, because two brothers. Yeah. With the first brother, he had only one son, and that's my grandfather. Second brother, he had (ten) children, and all this generation . . .

HY: So, your children were [from the] first.

EK: Mm hmm, mm hmm.

HY: And then on your mother's side of the family, it's the Purdys.

EK: My mother [Eliza Purdy Lindsey] is a Purdy because her [EK's] great-grandfather came from Ireland, Jack Purdy. Yeah, he married a Hawaiian woman. Mm hmm, and bore her [EK's mother's] father, had four children. And her father had just three children, my mother---in fact three girls, my mother and two sisters.

HY: Who is the Purdy---the songwriter, cowboy [referring to Ikua Purdy]. . . . Oh, gosh.

EK: Yeah. We have a Chillingsworth---Sonny Chillingsworth is a relative. Mm hmm.

HY: Oh, how is he related?

EK: Lindsey and the Purdys. Yeah. Funny, my father was married twice. With his first wife, she was Purdy, and he had three children with her, got divorced, and then he married my mother. My mother was a Purdy also. And his (first) wife and my mother were first cousins.

HY: Ho!

EK: Mm hmm. You had no choice those days. There wasn't that much girls around.

(Laughter)

EK: Even as I grew up, there wasn't much boys around, you know except families. If you ever got married, other than when I got married, I would probably have married a relative of mine.

HY: And the Jack Purdy, then married . . .

EK: He's the original Purdy that came from Ireland and married a Fanny Davis, who is part-Hawaiian, I guess Hawaiian-Caucasian. That was the famous Davis family, spent most of the time down at Kawaihae. I'm not too familiar with that family. That's where the family ties come in.

HY: And, so, your family then. . . . You come from a large family.

EK: We come from a large family.

HY: And, it was eleven children?

EK: My mother?

HY: Yeah.

EK: My mother had eleven.

HY: Eleven children.

EK: Mm hmm.

HY: Where are you in the birth order?

EK: I'm the second.

HY: You're the second.

EK: Second, mm hmm.

HY: Is the first a boy or a girl?

EK: Boy. (Coughs) Oh, my. My brother, Edwin, is above me, and then I'm the second of the family, and the first of the girls. So, we had eight girls and three boys in my family.

HY: Where did you---where was the property that you . . .

EK: Oh, I was raised. . . . Well, on that side of the street. . . . No. Right now the lower Episcopal school is there, I mean the HPA, Hawai'i Preparatory Academy. It's on that ground now, lower campus. And as you go further down the road, the upper campus is (our) other piece of property. Yeah.

HY: I think you mentioned last time that somewhere along, I think your mother's side, I think you said there were some Spanish, or . . .

EK: Oh, that's on my father's side. (Laughs) Well, I don't know, I'm beginning to find out now more about it because my father never ever said---nobody said. Those days, they don't talk about things like that, you know. So, now it's coming out. I'm beginning to put two and two together because of the years. The year that she [EK's grandmother] was born, and the year she died, and, you know, all that. And I found out that my grandmother, which is my father's mother, her parents couldn't bear children. Her mother and father couldn't have children. So, I don't know what happened along the line when A. W. Carter brought in these Mexican cowboys to teach our Hawaiian men how to be cowboys. And I guess that's when the relationship happened there. So, mm hmm.

HY: So, that was . . .

EK: This was on father's side. Yeah.

HY: This is your father's mother?

EK: My father's mother. Yeah. And her mother is---both [EK's great-grandmother and great-grandfather] of them is pure Hawaiian. Looking at them, they're just pure Hawaiian. But because they---both [together] couldn't bear child. So, something happened that they were able to have one. (Laughs) Mm hmm.

HY: Can you describe a little bit about the house that you lived in?

EK: Oh, my house?

HY: Yeah, when you were growing up.

EK: Yeah. Those days the homes were really big. It was a four-bedroom house with one bathroom, one kitchen, one pantry, a big living room, and a big kitchen, of course. And the porch---a porch right around the house. And this is the way the homes have been built. (Today, the homes) have porch around the house. But we had the porch for, I'm not sure how long, then my mother decided to---what you call it?---block it off, you know.

HY: Enclose?

EK: Enclose the whole thing because Waimea rains so much those days. And we always had rain. We grew up with the rain. That the porch would always get wet, you know, was beginning to rot. So, she decided to enclose the whole thing. So, it was a big house. And we had wooden stove, and later on we had a kerosene stove, but we always had a wooden stove because we didn't have any electricity then. In fact those lamps there---my mother's kerosene lamps up there. (EK points to the kerosene lamp on her wall.)

HY: Ho!

EK: (Laughs) We lived by kerosene lamps. And that was a chore because every weekend we had to fill up the kerosene; we had to clean the chimney. And lot(s) of times we would break it, and we would get good spanking for it. So, but I don't know how we managed to do our homework by this small, you know, (glow) of lights there.

HY: Was this a home that was provided for by Parker Ranch?

EK: No. At that time, when my father first worked for the ranch, they were living in ranch homes. That was before my time. So, he was. . . . They would all say, "That's where your dad lived! That's where your dad lived!" These were Parker Ranch homes. So, finally, I'm not sure, the state [Territory of Hawai'i] opened up some lots down that area. So, Mr. [A. W.] Carter saw to it that these employees should have their own homes. So, they were five-acre parcels at that time. So, my father built his own house. And all through payroll deduction. There was no banks, no credit unions to go and borrow money from, you know.

HY: So, they provided the financial backing to buy, or to build homes.

EK: Mm hmm. Every time we needed money, my parents would go to the ranch office. And they, of course, naturally they'll take it out from their payroll.

HY: Did they lease land then from Parker Ranch, or was that . . .

EK: No, no. That was outright.

HY: They were outright. Oh, I see.

EK: Yeah, those were fee simple lands. But I imagine must have been real reasonable, you know.

HY: So, that's different than the housing that Parker Ranch actually provided for their employees . . .

EK: Provide for the. . . Yeah, it is different. Yeah. As I said, he first lived in a ranch house when he was employed by the ranch. Then finally he was able to get his own home. But because of his position with the ranch at that time, he was fortunate that they would see to it that he was well provided for.

HY: Can you talk a little bit about what it was like growing up in this big family as the oldest girl and the second child?

EK: (Laughs) Oh, yeah, I would say. . . Well, we had so many children, I mean my mother kept having children. So, I was practically, being the oldest [daughter], I was the only one that she could depend on, you know. It was always. . . Well, they called me, "Tida," which was my pet name at the time. So every time it's, "Tida this. Tida this. Tida that. Tida do this. Tida bathe the kids. Tida do the cooking. Tida go to the store and pick up the meat and the poi." And those days, Parker Ranch provided a lot. We had all this extra benefits. Oh, we had the bag poi about this size [large size]. Once a week, we pick it up from the butcher shop. Oh, I don't know how many pounds of meat, maybe about twenty pounds of beef, butter, milk, cheese—those were the extras. Because their pay---their salary was very low. And that made up for it. And free medical.

So, as I was growing up, I remember always having to chop the wood to provide fire for the wood stove. And we built---I mean we had to boil our hot water for bathing on top of the stove in the big cans before we could. . . And then carry and empty it into the bathtub. When I grew up, luckily we had bathtub. We didn't have *furo* like Hisa [EK's husband, Hisao Kimura] folks. The only thing, we didn't have running water, hot water. Everything had to be boiled on the stove and poured into the tub. And bathe the kids, and did the cooking, and every morning before going to school, my mother would see that we would clean the house, sweep and mop. And she loves to garden. She loves to be outside. So, sometimes we have to go out. This is about five, six o'clock in the morning. We have to get up, feed the kids, and go out and help her pick flowers—she would sell her flowers—or water the plants. Either that or get the house clean before---so by the time you get to school, which was lucky school started at eight [A.M.]. By time we got to school, school is on [already started].

HY: You put in a full day's work already.

- EK: Yeah. (Laughs) And that's not it. You come home, gather up the wood, start the fire, place the fire, the woods are going. And you know, either mix the poi, or cook the rice, or throw the beef into the oven. And the wood stove oven was so good.
- HY: Where did your mother sell her flowers?
- EK: We had about two lei people in Waimea, that did flower leis. And there she would sell it to them, which was very---maybe fifty cents for a big can of '*ākulikuli* flowers. But that was money.
- HY: And who would the lei makers sell their leis to?
- EK: People come through---mostly the people that come through that stop by, and ask for---put an order in. Yeah.
- HY: From?
- EK: Hilo---somebody from Hilo on their way to Kona, or somebody from Honolulu coming in.
- HY: So, there was enough traffic . . .
- EK: Not enough traffic, but maybe if she. . . . Lei maker probably sells one lei in couple days, or something.
- HY: Oh, I see. A side, side, side business.
- EK: Yeah. Mm hmm.
- HY: Did you play with your brothers and sisters?
- EK: I hardly---well, it was mostly work. That's why I was tough. I always gave my older brother good lickings because he was treated---what you call?---I would say like a pet in the family. So, he got away with lot of things.
- HY: Younger brother?
- EK: No, my older brother.
- HY: Oh, Edwin?
- EK: Yeah, Edwin. I would get so mad with him because it seemed like it's his duty to chop the wood, it's his duty to pack the wood in, but I have to do it for him. So, it upsets me. So, I would just fight with him. And I was a very good athlete because I was strong.
- HY: Why do you think much of the burden of the work at home fell on your shoulders?
- EK: Because I would do it. If I don't, I get pulled in the hair, I get the broomstick on my back because my mother would. . . . I guess she's overly tired because having too many children, and the laundry's done by hand, charcoal ironing, and she starch her clothes. Every bit of

clothes was starched. You know, she spends all day ironing, all day laundry.

HY: Was she the disciplinarian in the family?

EK: Yeah. Mm hmm. My father was good. We loved our dad because he wasn't as strict as my mother was. Yeah. And then I'm thankful for that because I probably would have gone astray, too, if, you know, didn't have that kind of upbringing.

HY: Why is it that your brother didn't get the same kind of . . .

EK: As I said, he was the privileged character in the house. My father and mother just favored him. So, he got kind of spoiled. And I couldn't sulk in any way like he could. If my father asked him to do something, he will just sulk and run away. I cannot. There's lot of things I couldn't do. It would fall back on me.

HY: Did you. . . . Was Hawaiian language that was spoken?

EK: My father and mother spoke Hawaiian, but we spoke English.

HY: Did you speak Hawaiian to your father?

EK: No.

HY: You spoke English, and he would speak Hawaiian back?

EK: English and he would. . . . Uh huh [yes]. That's the only way we learned the language. We were not taught the language. It's just all hearsay [hearing the language], you know. I don't speak fluent Hawaiian, but I (understand the language).

HY: Did your mother speak English to you?

EK: She spoke English, but she spoke Hawaiian just as much as she did English. But my father was strictly Hawaiian.

HY: Where did you go to school?

EK: Was Waimea [Public] School up until the eighth grade. School was up till eighth grade. Then, to continue on to high school, we (went) to school in Kohala. Kohala High School, and we boarded at the Kohala Seminary. Those days, A. W. Carter took care of education for the girls only.

HY: Why was that?

EK: Because he wanted the boys to learn to ranch—be a cowboy on the ranch with their father. So, in my family, A. W. would. . . . If there's a son born in the family, when he's about seven or eight years old, he would bring—he would provide the (bridle and) saddle for him. And my father would take him out on horseback, train him to learn how to ride the horse.

HY: And so, he would provide education for the girls . . .



EK: And that way, we couldn't go to Honolulu because I guess it was too expensive at the time. Some girls were fortunate, they were able to go to Kamehameha [Schools], or to St. Andrew[']s Priory. And after that, they went to [Territorial] Normal [and Training] School to become schoolteachers. We didn't have the university then. All normal school graduates.

But we girls were sent to Kohala, to attend Kohala High School, and we would board at—we used to call it the seminary. It was a boarding facility. At one time, it was a school for girls [Kohala Girls' School]. They would board there and go school there. Then later on, it just became a boarding facility. And the girls were transported down to Kohala High School.

HY: How was it when you were there? Was it a boarding school, or were you transported?

EK: (The Kohala Seminary was a boarding facility for the girls. We were transported to Kohala High School which was a public school.)

HY: Oh, I see. Back when you were in grade school [Waimea Public School] then, how big was the class?

EK: Oh, the class would be about twenty students in the class.

HY: What was the ethnicity of the students in your class?

EK: We had more Japanese than any other race. Probably---maybe one Chinese, one White, our class didn't have any Whites. Yeah. One Chinese, and Japanese. Yeah, we're more predominantly Japanese.

HY: Did your classmates interact with each other?

EK: Oh, yeah. We were good friends. In fact we tried to be friends with the Japanese kids because we couldn't even. . . . Well when I went to school, in lower class, there was no cafeteria. So we had to bring our own lunch. So that means pancake, saloon pilot—you know those big crackers—we call it saloon pilot. Or we go without lunch. If there's a fruit in the house, we just take a fruit and go to school, and that's our lunch. But the Japanese kids, the mothers always made *bentōs* for them. You know, with *ume*, and *kōkō*. And so, that way we used to exchange.

I had an uncle, who was always. . . . Whenever he saw us on the highway or on the road, he would take us to the store, and buy candy, or orange, or apple. We never had fruits like that. It's only during Christmas time when we have apple or orange in our household. Yeah, but my uncle, every time after school, if he's sitting at the Parker Ranch office, and see us going by, he would call us and take us into the store. Buy candy for us. That's why we just love him. Yeah, my father was good in that way. If he was at the office and he see us, he would take (us) into the store, too. But my mother, no. We can't because every penny counts for her, you know, and every penny means. . . . Well we have bills to take care of, and we cannot be extravagant, you know. We had---there's enough food to eat in the house. So, you don't need the candy, you don't need the fruits.

HY: Was she the one that kept track of the family finances?



EK: Mm hmm, mm hmm. She was.

HY: Did she do other work?

EK: No, she's just a housewife. There's no work for them. No job. Strictly housewife. But they were good. I really respect them for that. They helped one another. Her cousins or my aunties, or if somebody in the family was ill, they would go and help one another with the family problems. If she had child, then my aunty would come up and help her deliver, come and help her nurse the baby, I mean, take care the baby, or help take care of us, you know. Yeah, they did lot of that. They exchanged that way.

HY: Supported each other.

EK: Yeah. They really did support each other. Mm hmm.

HY: Did you play with any neighborhood kids?

EK: No. If we did, we had to run away and do it.

HY: Did you do that?

EK: Mm hmm. (HY laughs.) Yeah.

HY: What would you do?

EK: All we did was climb trees because those days, each house had to plant trees to divide the boundaries, you know. That's why there (are) so many trees in Waimea. That's to divide the boundaries because we didn't have . . .

HY: They were property markers?

EK: Yeah. Mm hmm. And they plant especially the pine trees. They were so close, we were just like Tarzan, just swinging from one tree to the other, you know, play that way. And the neighbor kids would come and join us. No, my mother couldn't see us playing, all she could see us [doing] is work.

HY: So, you had to run away to do that?

EK: Run away to do it. That's why we used to love to go to Sunday school. We used to walk from my house up to church, where church row is. (Church row is an informal way people would refer to that area.)

HY: Which church?

EK: 'Imiola. The yellow church. 'Imiola Congregational Church. Yeah. So, we would go to Sunday school that's to get away from home, get away from responsibilities, and everything else. And after Sunday school, we'd go and sit in church, that's how we learned that little bit about Hawaiian, too, because the ministers were all Hawaiian at the time. So, their sermons were all in Hawaiian.

And then after church, we would walk down the road, just take our time to come home, play on the road, and then we'd stop at the park sometimes if there's a ball game going on. We'd stop at the park. And then when we get home, she's going to ask us, "What happened? What took you so long?" So, lot of times, we don't tell her what happened, you know, otherwise we get spanking.

HY: How did you feel about that strictness?

EK: At that time, always in my mind, "Oh my, why me? Why me? Why is she always. . . have me do?" Because we have other sisters in the family that could do the job, too. But I couldn't answer her back, I just had to do what I was asked to do, you know. And in my mind, I always felt, "Oh boy, I just want to run away from here." But I know I wouldn't dare, I couldn't dare do it. It's just the thought in my mind.

HY: Was school a reprieve from some of that for you?

EK: Oh, the school was good. I loved school. Yeah. Except that I always got to school late, you know, because we had to do all (the) chores at home first.

HY: Did you have favorite subjects?

EK: Yeah. I used to love math. Math and English. And then I loved sports, too.

HY: Did they have opportunity for girls to play sports then?

EK: No, we didn't have anything. There was no basketball team, no baseball team.

HY: Did you play. . . Were you able to play [sports] just on your own?

EK: Play on my own and play with the kids in school. And those days, we used to play hopscotch. You know, hopscotch, jacks, yeah, marbles. And during sports time, the physical ed [education] director would, you know, we'd get together, and just hit balls. So, play baseball. Baseball was the only sport at the time.

HY: And then would girls get to participate in that as well?

EK: Mm hmm, mm hmm. Outdoor baseball.

HY: So then, when you went to Kohala, how was that?

EK: It was a boarding facility there. We did have a matron, Mother Hill. We addressed her as Mother Hill, Mrs. Jane Hill. She came from the Mainland. She was a nurse in the First World War. And she lost her husband during the war. So, I guess. . . And the boarding school there was operated by our church denomination, the main office there—Hawai'i Conference UCC, United Church of Christ up in. . . They were responsible in seeing the operation of the boarding school there.

HY: How was that for you adjusting to living there then after . . .

EK: Oh, I loved it when I went there, although I missed home. It's just over the---just---what?---forty miles, not even forty miles away from home, but I---we were so homesick. But they were so strict there. We could only come home during Christmas and summer. So, Easter and Thanksgiving, we have to spend our time there. Mr. Carter, at the time, saw to it that we didn't---there's no need to come home. So, what the matron would do, is plan activities for us, especially during Easter. You know, either we take a trip around the island, or we would go picnicking down at the beach, or something like that.

HY: Can you describe what the boardinghouse looked like? What your facilities were like?

EK: It's a real New England-type building because the buildings were formerly owned by Father---Who's that missionary in Kohala?---Bond, Elias Bond [originally from Maine (1813-1896)], who owned that property, and put up that building for schooling. It was a school for girls. So, that was his property. He was a missionary in Kohala, and founded the Kohala church, the Congregational church [Kalāhikiola Congregational Church]. And, I guess because it was a Congregational church, and this is how our Congregational. . . . At the time, it was called the Hawaiian Evangelical Association that managed the boarding for the girls. So, together with Parker Ranch, they kept the operation of the boarding there. The ranch provided our tuition, so we didn't have to pay anything.

HY: Did each girl get their own room?

EK: No. There was room, maybe two girls would be in one room. There were rooms that could just take so much, depending on the rooms that we have there. So, two girls per room. And sometimes, one girl per room. If her roommate moves out, then that leaves just herself in the room. So, we had girls from Waimea here, and some from Kona and Hilo. Mostly the homeless type, or the girls from domestic---broken homes.

HY: But that was not the case for you.

EK: Mm hmm. For us, well, that was the only place that Parker Ranch could send us.

HY: What was that like being with these . . .

EK: It was nice. It's a new experience for us. At least we got to meet new, well mostly girls---new girls. We had so much fun together. Everybody joked, and sang, and talked story. And every night, of course, Mother Hill had her schedule just so-so [fixed]. Go to school in the morning, come back in the afternoon. We have a light refreshment, then we'd go outside and just play. Play until it was dinnertime, or shower time. Girls would all take turn. Do the cooking with the cook. We have a cook.

HY: Do you remember who the cook was?

EK: We used to call her Yoshiko. Yoshiko . . . Forgot her name, was. . . . She was a nice girl. Yoshiko Yahiku, I think it's Yahiku. So, Mother Hill would set up a schedule, where so many girls do the cooking for dinner, and then breakfast, and lunch is only on Saturday (and Sunday). So, we would help (in the kitchen). When it's time---usually about four o'clock, it's time to go in and cook. Help the cook cook (the) food. And we had a nice, big dining room.

All round tables, and about four chairs on each table. So, each table had its own waitress. You know, we were taught how to set the table, how to unset the table. (Coughs) Yeah, we were taught that way. Mother Hill taught us to be really domesticated. And because for some of us, well, I learned how to cook.

HY: I'll flip the tape over, so you can catch your breath.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

EK: The first thing we would do every morning is get up and get ready for school, have breakfast, get on the bus, and go down to school at Kohala High School, come back in the afternoon, change our clothes, and have a light refreshment which means, maybe a banana, or an orange, and then go out and play in the yard. Some girls don't play, they just get their *'ukulele*, or guitar, and sit around and sing. Then it's time to cook. Cooks go down and cook, and the rest would take a shower because we had an outdoor shower. Oh, but the shower room was, oh, from here past this house here [about fifteen feet]. We had to take an early bath otherwise we go in the dark. You know, there wasn't much electricity then at the time.

HY: What subjects did they teach you?

EK: At the high school?

HY: Yeah.

EK: Oh, all subjects. Except at the time, we didn't have computer, or. . . . There was shorthand, there was typing, business, you know. There was chemistry, and science, history, English, algebra, math, literature. . . .

HY: So, your domestic training was mostly outside of school . . .

EK: (No. Home economics was a four-year course. I enjoyed every bit of it.)

HY: Was that at the dorms?

EK: (Yes, we had responsibilities in caring for the dorms, dining room, showers.) But already we knew---I knew how to iron with all charcoal iron. And we all did. . . . Oh, downstairs where the laundry room is, we have all these tubs, all lined up. And each girl is in one tub, (scrubbing) their (laundry).

HY: With a washboard?

EK: With a washboard. And (we) would hang (our laundry) on the line.

HY: And when you say charcoal iron . . .

- EK: Yeah. It's heated with the charcoal in it. It's a cast-iron type, and you would have to heat the charcoal, and put it in the iron, and it heats up, and then you press your clothes with that. But every now and then, you have to refill it with charcoal again because it'll burn out. If you have a big stack of laundry, you need to refill it. And sometimes it dies on you. So, you have to put it out in the wind, so the wind could start up the flame again.
- HY: What was the class size?
- EK: At Kohala High School, was around, I would say about thirty.
- HY: So, little bigger than . . .
- EK: Than the elementary school. Yeah. Mm hmm.
- HY: And was the ethnicity of your classmates different?
- EK: We had lot of Filipinos because Kohala was plantation area. Yeah. Filipinos, Japanese, of course, and Portuguese, and then had the *Haoles*, of course, too. Chinese. There were a lot of Chinese in Kohala.
- HY: So, little different than Waimea.
- EK: Mm hmm, mm hmm.
- HY: What was the majority, would you say?
- EK: Japanese.
- HY: Mostly Japanese?
- EK: Mostly Japanese. Yeah. And usually, the Japanese (are) always the brightest students in the class. (Laughs) They had all the *A's* and *B's*. (Laughs) We had the *C's* and the *F's* (laughs).
- HY: But you liked school?
- EK: Oh, I did. I did pretty good in school.
- HY: Did they teach language in school?
- EK: No. No language. We didn't even have Spanish, or French, or. . . . I guess that's all college subjects. Yeah. No language.
- HY: Was it an isolated area where the boardinghouse was?
- EK: It was out of town, up in. . . . From the main highway it goes up into the hill like, you know. It was quite a ways from the main highway. It was isolated. So, we were surrounded by trees and shrubs. Was beautiful, beautiful place.

HY: And then, when you were brought into the school, was that also a very isolated area?

EK: (No. Kohala High School was centralized in the heart of town accessible to all the little surrounding towns.) Was so good because if you're a student there, after summer is over, and time to go back to school, Parker Ranch provides transportation. They would have a bus or cars that will take all the ranch girls to the school, and a truck to haul all our luggage. Those days, we didn't have these handbags. We had trunks—regular trunks to put all our blankets, and towels, and pillows, and clothes all in there. In fact, we still have our trunks (stored away). Nowadays, they put it in boxes and suitcases. And my mother used to have to go out and buy trunks.

HY: Just like the big steamer trunks?

EK: (Yes.)

HY: You mentioned that A.W. Carter---his vision for the boys on the ranch, is of course, to become cowboys, then he would provide education for the girls. Did he have some vision for what he wanted them to do?

EK: For the girls?

HY: Yeah.

EK: To prepare them to be housewives.

HY: He wanted them to stay on the ranch?

EK: The boys, to stay on the ranch. The girls, was mostly to prepare them to be housewives. If you (got) good grades in high school, he would send you to college. Maybe to Honolulu, at the university. But that depended on your grades.

HY: Did he expect then, the girls to return to Parker Ranch?

EK: Oh, yeah.

HY: I see.

EK: But there was no job for the girls, except to come home, and probably get married. But the boys, they all had job, as long as you're an employee, child of an employee, you're guaranteed a position on the ranch. Either a cowboy, or roughrider, or, you know. Some type of work there was for the boys.

HY: What kind of attitude did your family have about education for their (children)?

EK: My mother was all out for education.

HY: For her daughters?

EK: For her daughters, yeah. She really wanted us (to have) an opportunity, at least to get a high



school education. I wanted to go to college after that. In fact, one of the teachers spoke to A. W. that she thought I should continue and go into education. Those days, was either schoolteacher, or that's the only position that any parent could think of. You know, you be a schoolteacher, you're somebody.

HY: That would be the only option for the women?

EK: Yeah. Mm hmm. I was supposed to be a homemaking teacher, but I never got that far. That's when (I met) Mr. Kimura [EK's husband].

HY: Became a homemaker instead.

EK: I became a homemaker, yeah. In fact, right after high school, I was always interested in cooking. So, I wanted to be cafeteria manager. So, after graduation, I went to Hilo, and worked for a couple there. And those days, they train you to go to the cafeteria, and learn cafeteria management there. You don't need to go school. You just went to the cafeteria, and the manager would instruct you, and give you test. So, I did that for one year before I got married.

HY: So, were you living in Hilo then?

EK: Yeah. I had to work for these people, in order to have boarding place to stay, you know.

HY: That was, you said, right after you graduated?

EK: Right after graduation.

HY: And, what was that like, living in Hilo then?

EK: Hilo? Oh, that was a big city for me. I felt lost, but luckily, these people I worked for lived close to Hilo High School. So, it was within walking distance for me.

HY: Who were the people that you worked with?

EK: He was the manager of Love's Bakery at the time. Wilson---Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wilson. Yeah.

HY: And what kind of work---what kind of duties did you have with them?

EK: Just clean the house, and (help with the children, did the laundry).

HY: Domestic?

EK: Domestic work. Yeah, just for boarding. Was just to keep the house clean, and get the dishes washed in the morning before I went to school.

HY: And then did you finish that cafeteria . . .

EK: No, I did not. (Laughs) Oh, boy. Yeah, it was one year and then. . . . This was class of



[19]40. So, in [19]41, yeah, [19]41, I got married.

HY: Well, while you were still in Hilo, did you have time for recreation?

EK: No. I had to wait till Hisa [Hisao Kimura] comes in. Every weekend, then he'd come in (laughs). We have our own thing to do, yeah. Good thing, we had good friends, and had a good relative there that really kind of took care of us, knowing that we're---we felt like strangers in Hilo, you know. Didn't know too much about (the city).

HY: Were you homesick?

EK: I was homesick, yeah. But Hisa graduated from Hilo High School. So, he knew some of the folks there, and I hardly knew anybody.

HY: You met him while you were still a student?

EK: I was student at Kohala High School.

HY: I understand that caused kind of a commotion for you folks.

EK: Mm hmm. It really did.

HY: How did your family react to . . .

EK: My family was real nice about it. It was just his family, and the Japanese people in the community. They tried all kind of ways to prevent us from being together.

HY: What kind of things would they do?

EK: Oh, they would report Hisa to A. W. Carter, the family would go to see A. W. Carter, the brothers tried to lecture him, you know, but he refused to listen to anyone.

HY: And you say your family was fine?

EK: Oh, they were fine. My mother and father accepted real nicely, and graciously, you know. I don't know if they were sympathetic for me, or what. I don't know, but they were real nice about the whole thing.

HY: Why do you think that your family accepted the situation, and his (did not)?

EK: Being of (another racial ancestry—my parents had no racial discrimination in their hearts, at least from what I observed). I guess they [her family] probably know what love is all about (laughs), and I think they felt he was a gentleman, you know. So, and he was serious about it.

HY: How did you feel about all the commotion that caused his . . .

EK: You know, when I look back, at my age, it didn't bother me because I didn't know what the hell was going on, you know.

HY: Were you aware that . . .

EK: Yeah, I was aware of it, you know, but I didn't take it so seriously. But it was a serious thing. And I keep telling, gee whiz! Had I known this is what was going on I probably would have stopped the relationship. But I didn't know any better, you know. Love is love no matter what.

HY: Did you get any response from the people at the school?

EK: Oh, at Kohala High School?

HY: Yeah. You say your family accepted the situation. How did they [the school] feel about it? I guess Mrs. Hill and . . .

EK: Oh. Mrs. Hill. Well, because the Carters, A.W. Carter, and the son, Hartwell Carter, they had all these reports coming back to them, they tried to prevent it, too. So, she was trying to prevent it, too. But we were smarter than her because . . .

(Laughter)

EK: Oh, I hope all this not going in the book. (Laughs) Oh, boy. But, we used to write letters. And then every time, well, the letter would come through her because she picks up the mail, and she distributes all the mail, and she would see this, and she would stop me for it. She would stop me from writing to him, or him writing to me. But we had other means, you know, of. . . . So, he would write to me, and address it to a friend in town. One of my classmates. She picks it up from her box—post office—and she would pass it on to me, you know. I'd do the same thing.

HY: Did your teachers---were they involved in this at all?

EK: No. No. They weren't. They didn't know what was going on. It was just the matron at the school.

HY: Do you think it was more. . . . What was the reason they were so upset about it, primarily, do you think?

EK: Because of the racial---I think it's prejudice.

HY: The racial . . .

EK: Well, probably not prejudice because they came from Japan, you know, these people. And they were strictly---they almost felt that Japanese marry Japanese, or Hawaiians marry Hawaiians. Well, it was almost that way, you know, during that time. The Hawaiians would marry the Hawaiians, Orientals marry Orientals, Filipinos marry Filipinos. So, I don't know what attracted, Hisa, you know, to. . .

Because while we worked together, every New Year's, Parker Ranch would have a big *lū'au*, New Year's *lū'au* for its employees. And we girls from the Kohala Seminary have to come back and kind of help with the party. You know, do our share, as in, you know, respect for

what they doing for us, giving us the education. So, and Hisa. . . . Hisa's job was, then at the time, was to always decorate the place. He goes out with the Boy Scouts, and his working boys, and get all the greens, come back, and we'd put it together and decorate the hall. So, I guess---I didn't even think he had his eyes on me or anything, but (HY laughs) in the process, in due time, well, it happened. No, I think it was, well not because I was Hawaiian. I guess it was those days that parents. . . . Japanese marry Japanese. They couldn't see any other way.

It was difficult for me because they always felt that the Hawaiians are lazy, all they can do is play the *'ukulele*, dance the hula, don't know how to cook, don't know how to sew. But, I was fortunate that these are things that I was taught by my mother. My upbringing helped me a lot. Even then, when I married him, I had to prove to his family—because Japanese style, you know, you live with the family. They don't live with you, you live with them.

HY: So, in 1941, before the war, you got married.

EK: Yeah.

HY: From Hilo, you moved right in with the Kimuras, Mrs. Kimura?

EK: No, I was here [Waimea]---got married here, and then Hisa lived with my parents for couple months.

HY: At the beginning of your marriage?

EK: Yeah. And then we moved [in] with the mother because the mother was living alone [Hisao Kimura's father had passed away] in a ranch house, because the father was [had been] employed by the ranch. So, we moved in with the mother. But she gradually accepted me. In fact, I had to prove---I really had to prove myself that I'm not what they thought I was.

HY: Can you describe what it was like living [in that situation]?

EK: I had to---I mean, you can't just sit around, you know . . .

HY: I mean, what would be a typical day for you?

EK: Oh, well, I get up in the morning because Hisa starts work about six o'clock in the morning. So, I get up at five, I do breakfast and make his lunch. He goes off to work, then I have to get breakfast ready for me and my kids and *Baban*, too, you know. So, I have that all done. Then, clean the house, do the laundry. And then just before time---*pau hana* time, which is about 3:30 [P.M.] on Parker Ranch. I loved to bake. So, I used to have coffee ready, and dessert ready when Hisa comes home. And then he has his coffee, and then he's out. He's out with the boys.

He used to coach basketball, baseball. He was always coaching, you know, some kind of sports. So, get that ready, and then after he's gone, then I get dinner going. Bathe the kids, you know, and during my spare time, either I'm baking, or I'm sewing. I did lot of sewing for my children. I used to go to the classes that they have. The University [of Hawai'i] Extension Service used to have workshops on sewing, and whatever. Yeah.

HY: Would you do some of these activities with your mother-in-law, or did you provide for her then? Did she---did you both do these things together?

EK: We did together. Yeah. She did her own thing. I mean, she loves to garden outside. And her job, as far as cooking is concerned, is to wash the rice. She loves to wash---because she used to raise pigs, maybe one or two pigs, and she would save the (milky water) of the rice (for the pigs' food). So, that's her job. She does only the rice. And then we used to have this kind of rice where you cook outside. We didn't have rice cooker, or we didn't [cook on] top stove---cook on the stove. We cooked outside with the wood. And that was the best rice to eat. She took care of that part, and I did everything else.

And then sometimes, if she, depending if we have different kind of vegetables, she would make *kōkō*, you know, pickles. *Namasu*, and stuff like that. And then we work together, we always did together. And New Year's, every New Year's, you know, Japanese always have their big celebration. So, the night before, everybody---you have to get your food all prepared before midnight. Yeah. So, she and I used to always do together. She would make the sushi, and I would do the rest of the food. I mean, we got to be real. . . . After we had our children, things became better.

HY: When was your first?

EK: Leo [Leonetta], my oldest one. She (lives) right next door. She was born 1941, too. And when I had Leila, my second daughter, she would---Leo was still baby. So, she [EK's mother-in-law] helped take care of her. She was real good about that. She used to baby-sit her, and take care of her while I'm nursing this one. And then go to bed with her, and she would take care of her, you know, while I'm nursing this other one. And then, third one comes. She does the same thing.

HY: So, her grandchildren brought her closer to you?

EK: Yeah. She was a big help to me. And during the war, that's when I went out to work at the telephone company [Mutual Telephone Company], because they were looking for girls because, you know, war with Japan. They weren't going to hire Japanese girls because of the censorship, and all that goes on the telephone wires. So, even at that, even if I went to work, I did all my duties as a mother before I went to work. I saw that the dinner was cooked before I left, kids are bathed. But I don't go to work until ten o'clock at night. I have the night shift. So, all during the day, I'm doing all these chores.

HY: When do you sleep then?

EK: Luckily, we can sleep at the switchboard at that time because the traffic wasn't heavy, there was not many calls. I could go to bed from twelve at night till six in the morning. And we're allowed to bring the bunk right (up to the) switchboard. And if somebody calls, the alarm would wake us up, see, and then we'd answer.

HY: Who was it that recruited you for this job?

EK: The supervisor in charge of Waimea station [of the Mutual Telephone Company] here.

HY: Who was that?

EK: Mrs. Emma Pinho. She was my supervisor. There were very few us girls in Waimea at the time that were non-Japanese. And we went to the same church, I guess, and I almost was a neighbor of theirs when we were living up there. So, she kind of knew who I was, and we knew each other.

HY: Just to backtrack a little bit. Can you describe what you were doing when you found out about the war? I guess December 7. Do you remember what you were doing?

EK: Oh, December 7. Yeah. Well, I remember getting up that morning. This was about---just before eight o'clock, Sunday morning. I had put my coffee on, and getting breakfast ready. And I thought: Well, I'll just put the radio on while I'm getting breakfast going, because there was no TV. And just before eight o'clock---and usually at that hour, in Utah, they have this big tabernacle, the Mormon Tabernacle [Choir]. You know, they were playing the music. I forget how it was. They have a big choir. They were on the air that morning. And they must have been on the air for about five or ten minutes before the radio announcer came in and said, "Stand by! Stand by!" You know, "I have an urgent report!" Something like that, and they said, "Oh! I think we're under attack! We're under attack from Japan!" Or something like that they said. That's when we all listened around the radio. And my daughter was only six months old at the time.

HY: But he's [EK's husband] already gone to [work] . . .

EK: No, he wasn't. No, not yet.

HY: Oh, that's a Sunday. That's right.

EK: Yeah, this is Sunday morning. So, it didn't take too long after that when the ranch manager called everybody to the ranch office.

HY: Was that Hartwell [Carter] then?

EK: Hartwell then, mm hmm. Hartwell because his father [Alfred Wellington Carter] was still living at the time, but Hartwell was carrying out the orders for the father. Father lives in Honolulu, and Hartwell lives here.

So, I think Sunday, yeah, right away Sunday, after lunch, afternoon, the men were all called out. And each one was assigned to a different post on the ranch to kind of watch. They were worried that the Japanese might come back again. But I know that Hisa's job at that time was to guard the water resource up in the mountain. He and another employee were assigned that. And here I was---*Baban* was not home at that weekend because December 6, Hisa's sister [Sueko Kimura Iwanaga] got married in Honolulu. He had a sister in Honolulu. She got the date of her marriage. So, *Baban* went down, and Hisa's other sister [Tsugi Kimura Kaiama] went down, too, for the wedding. And then December 7, the next day, was the attack---Pearl Harbor attack. So, she was stranded there for six months because being an alien, she couldn't come home. They were so strict about transportation, communication. But luckily she was taken care of by the A. W. Carters in Honolulu.



HY: Did the authorities question her? Do you know?

EK: I don't. . . . Not in Honolulu. I don't think so.

HY: How long was it before they allowed her to come back to Waimea?

EK: She was there for about six months. She couldn't come back. And the sister was able to come home within two weeks, I think.

HY: Because . . .

EK: Because transportation was hard . . .

HY: She had American citizenship?

EK: Mm hmm. Because the airplanes was the only means of communication, I mean transportation, and they would give the military priority. There were priorities at that time where military or officials of big companies, or whatever were. . . . And the planes were small then at the time. They could carry just so much.

HY: How soon after were you asked to work for Mutual Telephone Company?

EK: This is [1944]. Yeah, (1944) I think it was, when they asked me to work. I thought it was a temporary job, but it became a full-time job, and I really enjoyed it. I worked there for about ten years before the conversion from that crank-type phone to the dial, automatic phone.

HY: Can you describe . . .

EK: But, was really. . . . We were monitored on the line. You know, the military would monitor us, so we couldn't say anything. We couldn't carry on a conversation, or talk about the weather. So, it was just, "Number please," and then just connect your party to whatever. You know, and even if somebody would call in, and say, "Oh, what is the weather like today?"

And I would say, "Oh, it looks nice." You know, right away we would get cut off. Can't do anything, because they might hear---the enemy might hear all this conversation on the phone, on the lines. Yeah. So, was an interesting job. I loved it. Yeah, I learned fast. And yet, I was able to take care of my family. (My oldest daughter, Leonetta, was three years [old] when I was offered a job at the phone company. It was a difficult decision for me but since we were in an emergency, with my husband's and family's encouragement, I accepted the position.) Then, I had Leila, my second daughter. And I had Larry; I was still working. My mother-in-law was a big help, and my mother was, too. She was still living. You know, she would baby-sit for me, too. I had two mothers to baby-sit. Mm hmm.

HY: Did you continue working the graveyard shift?

EK: I used to work the day shift, and then I found was kind of little bit too hard for me, because I was having babies. So, I finally took the night shift, which was against Hisa's wishes, but it was the best shift for me.

HY: Can you describe more about what kind of duties you had there?

EK: Yeah. Was setting up the switchboard, plugging in all the plugs into the board, and taking calls, and then answering the calls. And those days, they would charge you from every little town, you know, one town to the other. We have to make bills. And from Kohala to Hilo there was a charge for that. Waimea to Honoka'a there's a charge. So, we were kept busy. We had to (answer and monitor the switchboard, and prepare statements on long-distance calls: daily charges on distant calls, that is from one district to another, and on long-distance calls). We (had) to make sure it's charged to the right party, to the right number. And especially at night, whoever goes to work at night has to check all the (charges) for the day. All the operators had. . . . So, it was my job at night to (check all the statements). That was my job, (besides monitoring the switchboard).

HY: Can you describe what kind of instructions they gave you at the start of the war then?

EK: There were restrictions. We're not supposed to monitor the calls. The only time that we could monitor the calls is to see if the conversation is finished. Of course, we could tell by the lights on the switchboard. When two parties are talking, the lights is on. And when they're done talking, then it's off.

HY: Could they tell if you were monitoring calls?

EK: Some of them can, some cannot. When we split the key, they can tell, they can hear the click. But when you're so busy talking, you don't hear that click. So, you know, we're not supposed to listen in to people's conversation. And it's always been stressed that the customers is always right. So, sometimes we get into (a misunderstanding) with the customer on the phone (laughs). Oh, they say, "Well you gave me the wrong number! I asked for number so-and-so-and-so!"

I said, "Well, I'm sorry."

(Telephone rings.)

EK: This is where the supervisor come in. You have to be polite, and sweet. And (handle all calls with confidence).

HY: Were there any special instructions because you were doing this work during wartime?

EK: Special instructions is (followed when calls are made to) O'ahu (and other islands). (There was) a wireless station up at Waiki'i (that carried the messages). We had to be careful, not to ask too many questions. We were instructed (to say), "Number please? What number are you calling? And who is calling? And what number (are) you calling from?" And that's it. And no more.

HY: Were they worried. . . . Why was it that you weren't allowed to say more than that, specifically to O'ahu calls?

EK: Because they were worried about the calls being (interrupted by the enemy). (All) calls (were being) censored.



HY: (They might) be listening?

EK: (Yes.) (The telephone company) [was] strict. If you were calling Honolulu, and you were talking, and you mentioned something about aircraft, the weather, (the enemy, etc., parties would be disconnected from their conversation as) the wireless company, or the telephone company people, are listening to your conversation. And they would interfere, and just cut you off, your conversation.

HY: Would the people that would censor the calls, were they employed by phone company?

EK: (Yes, and by the military.) I had a brother-in-law, who was in the navy, that worked for the telephone company. And that was his job. That's how he met my sister.

HY: How big a staff was there when you were working there, let's say during the wartime?

EK: Here in (Waimea) we had two girls at a time at the switchboard, at eight-hour shifts. (There were) three shifts during the day. (At least five girls were on duty a day. The company employed at least eight girls as switchboard operators.)

HY: How would you . . .

EK: I was happy to work for the company. (My husband worked for) Parker Ranch at the time, and (the employees were not) making that great of a pay. My first paycheck (and thereafter helped to subsidize his income).

(It was an incentive, you know (laughs). I kept on (working). They gave us good pay. And every three months, we'd have a pay raise, every three months for one year. And after that, every six months.

HY: Did Mutual Telephone become Hawaiian Telephone [Company]?

EK: In 1957. That's when it became Hawaiian Telephone.

HY: So, it's a precursor to Hawaiian Telephone?

EK: (It was) Mutual Telephone (Company). (My company pin with two rubies on it), and my ID [identification] pin (shows) Mutual Telephone. I worked ten years. So, every five years (of employment, you earned) a ruby. (I started working for the company in 1944 and completed in 1957. In between these years I raised my babies.)

HY: How did you get to work? I know there was a blackout. Did you . . .

EK: (At nights) Hisa (drove me to work). Where we lived it was close (to work). (I start work) at ten o'clock, and (get done at 6:00 A.M. next morning).

HY: Can you describe a little bit about what it was like to live with the blackouts, for instance?

EK: Well, it was difficult because we had to get everything done within a certain period of time. Be sure we get our groceries done, and cooking done, and bathing the (children), you know,

(before it gets dark). Of course during the war, I had Leo and Leila, (my) two girls. (Leo was five months when the war broke out. The war was still on when I had Leila.) I didn't have time to get to the hospital, so the doctor had to come to the house, deliver the baby at home.

HY: And it was at night?

EK: At night. It was about four o'clock in the morning. So, he [the doctor] (had) Hisa (drive his) car, (and) pick up my mother to come up and help, because *Baban* had to take care of the older one, Leo. (My mother was the doctor's practical nurse.)

(Once we got into the routine), because (it was an) emergency, everything had to be done by a certain time. So, although it was a new experience for us because we were living so peacefully, so comfortable, and you know, not have to rush, and do things. And all of a sudden, this Pearl Harbor attack. So, that kind of changed our lifestyle a little bit.

HY: Did you have any problems getting certain kinds of foods?

EK: Food. (Yes, but not to the extent where we were starving.) I remember gasoline was rationed. If you're a working (person), you (were allowed) five dollars, or ten dollars more for gasoline. They give you a coupon. (Liquor was rationed.) I don't know why. There's something special about liquor. People used to drink (a lot). And we (had) the lousiest liquor on sale. You know, those drinks, I don't think (the company puts them out to sell). I forgot what the names were. And we didn't have a liquor store here. So, the men would get together on a car, drive all the way to Honoka'a, and buy whatever. You know, it's limited to them.

HY: Why didn't they have liquor in the . . .

EK: Nobody started a liquor store here.

HY: It wasn't restricted?

EK: It wasn't restricted. I guess people didn't have the money to start one. Yeah.

HY: So, you didn't have any problems getting the food that you would normally get if there were no shortages?

EK: No problem. No shortage. I don't know when there were times when there were a shortage of food. (However), there were times (when) sugar (and rice was rationed). [According to *Hawaii's War Years* there was no territory-wide food rationing. The Big Island, however, imposed food rationing which lasted for only nine days.]

HY: But you didn't feel the impact of that?

EK: No, no. We didn't go hungry at all. There was always food.

HY: You had a curfew?

EK: Curfew? Mm hmm. I forgot when the curfew started. (When it starts to get dark) at night, (we had to be home). And all our windows had to be. . . . Those days we had window

shades. So, we always have to draw the shades down. With kerosene lamp, you hardly had light anyway. It's not like electricity. There was hardly any light. We bathe in the *furo*. So, that was outside of the main house. So, we always (took) early bath. And even then, if we went to take a bath late, we had (kerosene) lanterns. You know, as long as we found our way to the *furo* house, and you get in there, there's enough light for you to reach for the soap, and take a bath.

HY: I think I'm almost out of tape again.

END OF SIDE TWO

TAPE NO. 22-99-1-93; SIDE ONE

HY: I forgot where we were. Oh, one thing I wanted to ask you about, was your Red Cross activities.

EK: Oh, yeah. That was during the war days. Parker Ranch organized a women's group [Parker Ranch Women's Club], all ranch employees, and any and all women of the community. They were asked to join this group to do knitting. And that was when Hisa's sister (Tsugi) taught the ladies how to knit woolen socks, and—what you call that? Mittens (and) scarfs. Scarfs, and caps for the head.

(They got together at least once a week and sometimes twice a week.) (I did not attend) the knitting class because that's when I had my babies, and working. We went down to Mr. [Richard] Smart's house [Richard Smart was the owner of Parker Ranch], and we had the Red Cross station there. And one of the nurses was an instructor, (taught us) how to fold bandages, and how to bathe a baby. In case of emergency, there were things that we need(ed) to (learn)—how to apply (bandages, cleanse wounds)—almost like a first-aid class. Yeah.

HY: What was the necessity of making more socks and. . .

EK: For the boys.

HY: Just for the military?

EK: You know when the boys came to Waimea, it rained, and rained, and rained. And I never saw (so much) rain. And it was so muddy out here. Because (with the military trucks driving all over the area) for practice, (Waimea became) a mud hole because of the rain. And they did lot of training down in the pastures and up in the mountains. (We needed to prepare the community should there be) an emergency, where we needed all these supplies.

And then military took over Waimea [Public] School, and used (it) as a hospital. And then across the street used to be the old Waimea Hotel. That too, was used as a hospital. So, all the (children) that went to Waimea School had to go to different homes. Different classes met at different homes for about a year.

HY: What about civilian patients? Where would they go?

- EK: Civilian patients would go to. . . . Oh, we didn't have Honoka'a Hospital at the time. So, they either would go to Hilo. Hilo [Hilo Memorial Hospital] (or to Kohala Hospital). The doctor (was) able to take care of mild type of sickness, or whatever. Very few emergency type. If there was, they would be transported to Hilo.
- HY: Did you ever need to use your Red Cross skills in actual emergencies?
- EK: Not during the war. No. Not for the war because they were here more for training, and when there was a casualty, the military would take care of their own, you know. And (the) Parker Ranch had their own doctor. They always brought in a doctor to care for ranch employees. And (she) had (her) own office here and would take care of the ranch employees.
- HY: Do you remember her name?
- EK: Doctor Ross, we used to call her. I'm not sure what her first name is.
- HY: Was this during wartime?
- EK: Wartime, (yes). It was so unusual to see a woman doctor because they always had a male doctor. And the male doctor operated from their home and (made) house calls. But when the woman doctor came in, she had an office space. She had a dispensary where the patients can go to her.
- HY: Did they have two doctors at the same time?
- EK: No, we had only one doctor. And then, after she left. . . . After [EK worked for] the telephone company, I worked for a doctor down here, too, who was a Parker Ranch doctor [Raymond Eklund]. I worked for him for (seven) years, too, you know. (I served as a medical secretary.)
- HY: Oh. During what period?
- EK: That was (1960-1967). This was way after the war. (It was June of 1967) when he [the doctor] retired and moved back to the Mainland. I'm not a professional woman. Maybe I'm a professional woman in all areas of. . . . But not one particular (profession), you know, like going to college and being a teacher, or nurse, or something. But I was fortunate in that I learned fast. And ten years with the telephone company, it was no problem for me. Then I worked (seven) years for Dr. [Raymond] Eklund, it was no problem for me, you know. Then I worked five years for the [Mauna Loa] Observatory, up at Mauna Loa, and that was no problem.
- HY: What did you do at the observatory?
- EK: We used to take data on the weather, weather reports, and movements of the clouds. So, we had a scientist that needed all the report recorded.
- (I) worked for Kawamata Farms [Inc.]. I've been there for fifteen years now. I've always been working, working, all through (my life).

HY: Just to go back wartime again, since there were restrictions on your movements after a certain hour, how did that change the home life then, after the curfews—you were saying, at seven o'clock—and blackout time?

EK: It didn't change at all. We went to bed early, the kids went to bed early. Well, we hardly could do any sewing at night. So, it was all during the day, and no cooking at night. So, it was just getting early dinner, early to bed. Of course, Hisa was always busy with the boys, you know, with sports and stuff. They had to be home early anyway. There's no such thing as having a beer bust after (laughs), otherwise he'll get arrested on the highway. Yeah.

HY: When the military started coming---what was your take on how the community responded to the influx of the military.

EK: Oh, we were shocked. We never expected---they just came out of nowhere. Of course, there was no announcement in the paper that Waimea was selected to be the base camp, you know. (Never realized that our territory was in danger.) And that really changed (our attitude), it really changed.

But luckily, as I said, I was already married, but for lot of families, it created lot of hardships on them, too, because we had a lot of wartime babies. That's for sure. And (for) most of them [the husbands] never came back. In fact, we had several girls that were married before their husbands were shipped out. And they---these girls moved to the Mainland to (join) their (new) families, to the husband's family. It didn't work out, so they all came back. The adjustment was just too much for them. But, oh, it really changed people's life here, you know, socially, economically. Well, financially it was great for some because I think that's the only time they ever saw money because nobody worked at the time [before the war], except for the men. Those days, only men worked, or schoolteacher, or secretary (were employed). All housewives were just housewives. But when the war came on, at least they took in the men's clothes---outfit, you know, did laundry.

HY: Was that one of the things that you did, too?

EK: I helped my mother do the . . .

HY: Laundry?

EK: She took---yeah, she took it in. I would go and help her. Twenty-five cents for a pair, top and bottom. All starched, and all hand washed, and there's no electricity. Although when they were here, they provided (electricity for the community). (The military had their own) activities. (There was) baseball games going on, among different camps, or whatever. And they had boxing. We had lot of boxing going on. The boys loved to box. They would box . . .

HY: This would be local boys?

EK: No. The military---all military boys.

HY: And then the community would get to watch?



EK: Just to watch, yeah, participate [by watching].

HY: Would they charge admission?

EK: No. No admission. It was done at the park, out in the open, on the stage.

HY: At the . . .

EK: At the ballpark. So, they were entertaining us, instead of us entertaining them. But the young kids were making money then, by delivering newspapers, selling newspapers. They would go to all the camps and sell newspapers. And five cents meant a lot to them. And then that's when my sister-in-law [Tsugi Kimura Kaiama] opened up a hamburger stand (called the Chuck Wagon). (Several) people went into the restaurant business. Waimea was so small at the time, but we had about four or five eating places, fast foods and dining.

Then we had the Parker Ranch---we organized a Parker Ranch Women's Club. All employees' wives became members of this club.

HY: What were the activities?

EK: Activity was to have programs at night. It's just like USO [United Service Organizations], where they provide some kind of activity for the boys, you know, social, card games, or. . . . Mostly was card games, and bingo, not bingo---what you call that?

HY: Pool?

EK: Pool. (Yes.) I don't know how many pool tables for the boys.

HY: Did they come to people's homes then?

EK: The families would invite them. Families became close with certain boys, you know. And the families host them, feed them. Mm hmm. So, they became friends, real close (friends). It wasn't "Peyton Place" [soap opera television show] at the time (HY laughs). You know, "Peyton Place" became known. Wives went to work for the hotels, when the hotels opened up. That was way after the war. And these wives from plantation era have never done any kind of work outside of home. So, when all these employees went to work for the hotel, there were so much domestic problem going on.

HY: But this was postwar?

EK: Yeah. But during the war, we didn't have any kind like that, except our single girls, really caught in the . . .

HY: How did the community react to a lot of the young---the younger women involved with military men?

EK: Well, their families were really hurt by it. But nothing you could do. Well, the boys didn't care because they weren't here to stay anyway. They were (here) to recuperate, or to go into training. But the boys were so nice. We had really nice boys out here. The ones we met, you

know, because my sister (became a mother of a little girl). The father of this little girl was a nice man. So, after they were---had to go down to the South Pacific during the war, we thought they would come back. I don't think any of them came back---hardly any. But it was a nice---it was an interesting life at the time, from the usual ranch-style that we were living. It caused lot of excitement. Of course, sadness, too, but it was a complete change.

HY: Did the military. . . . What was their initial response to being in this small community, with all these different ethnic groups?

EK: It seemed like they didn't mind, because they were too busy doing their own thing, too, that they knew [what] they had to do. They were not here to just loaf around. They had responsibilities to do. So, they knew they were going to be shipped out, so they had to train themselves for what's ahead of them. But I think the only complaint they had was the weather was bad. Oh, it was bad at that time. Just rained, and rained, and rained.

HY: Were there any other kinds of activities that you did? You know, you had the laundry---you did laundry. Did you provide recreation?

EK: I didn't [do] too much of that. My sister folks were involved with the USO. They did lot of entertainment for the boys. They had to put on programs. They did lot of cooking, too, you know, fast-meal cooking. And the boys, of course, through the military, we had a theater here, so the boys were able to go to the theater. And the USO would be right outside of the theater, where as soon as they come out, they have coffee and doughnuts, or sandwiches ready for them.

HY: Was that the people within the community that would be involved with USO?

EK: (Yes.) But it did change quite a bit of lifestyle of Waimea. Yeah, because they took over the (old) Japanese[-language] school, and used it as a, I forget what it was. First-aid station, took over the (Kamuela Hongwanji) Buddhist church, and (their) community hall for their activities. So, I remember the younger generation had no church to go to. So, they all became members of our church---the ['Imiola] Congregational Church.

HY: Did you continue going to that church then as . . .

EK: Mm hmm. I've been there all my life. So, when the war was over, they all went back to their (respective) church(es). (Then) there was a big drop in our membership.

HY: I have---one of the things I forgot to ask you about was your wages at Mutual Telephone. What were they like then?

EK: Oh, they were good, you know. My first paycheck, I came out with eighty-five dollars a month. A month!

HY: Yeah. So, that was better than . . .

EK: That was better.

HY: Than at Parker Ranch.



EK: Parker Ranch (employee) was getting about almost dollar-a-day type thing, you know. Yeah. So, I was so proud of my first paycheck. So, that kind of spoiled me, too, you know, that I wanted to keep on working. In fact, I kept on working right through, that way I was helping Hisa (with our children's) education, and you know, buy what they need. That was Hisa's main goal in life, was to make sure his (children got) an education.

HY: Did the military respond any differently to the Japanese in the community?

EK: No, no. I don't think so. I think they accept everybody as they are. Yeah. They were really nice about that. There was no prejudice, or anything. I guess we all knew we were in emergency, so, everybody was so nice to one another.

HY: Then after the war then, when the military started leaving, did some of these businesses---you know, you said your sister-in-law had opened a business . . .

EK: No, instead of keeping on with it, she closed down. Yeah. She closed her shop. I guess they were so tired. They just wanted to get out of it.

HY: Was that fairly typical of some of the businesses that cropped up because of the war? Did they then close down after the war?

EK: I think so. I asked her, "Why didn't you continue with your hamburger stand?"

"Oh, I had it!" she says. They were busy, busy. Just she and her husband (ran the business). We would go in as helpers, so we don't get paid, you know. We just help them. They come home ten, eleven at night, and then get back down there about six, seven in the morning. So, was really . . .

HY: So, did you do some of the cooking there as well?

EK: The cooking was all done at the hamburger stand.

HY: So, you would help her with . . .

EK: Help her with the cooking. Yeah.

HY: You were very busy then.

(Laughter)

EK: I still am! Funny? (HY laughs.) I don't know. I don't know if that's the kind of life was meant for me. I often wonder about that.

HY: Were the customers at the hamburger stand mostly in the military?

EK: Military, (yes), because the civilians couldn't afford to go out and eat. It was just the military.

HY: What was the price of the hamburger?

EK: Oh, twenty-five cents, maybe. I think so. Or maybe could have been cheaper. But the meat was cheap at the time. We had the Parker Ranch meat. Oh, was beautiful hamburgers.

HY: Did you have to grind your own meat?

EK: Yeah, we had to grind our own. We had those (meat) grinders. Even for home use, I (did) grind my own (hamburger). The Parker Ranch butcher didn't have a grinder. I don't think they even knew what hamburger was. Just chunks of meat, they would sell it to you.

HY: What else did they sell at the hamburger stand? Just hamburgers?

EK: Hamburger, hot dogs, and coffee, and soda. We didn't have potato chips at the time. No dried food.

HY: When the military started leaving, what was your reaction to them leaving?

EK: Oh, well, some people felt sad. Sad because the boys that they knew didn't come back, and nobody knows what happened, except probably their families in the Mainland. But local people here didn't know what happened to all their friends. And it was readjustment all over again because they had to clean up the areas that they were in.

HY: Was this Camp Tarawa? [The campsite became known as Camp Tarawa when the survivors from the battle of Tarawa arrived in 1943.]

EK: Clean up all the Camp Tarawa, and wherever they were. They were all over. There were tents all over the community.

HY: Not just in the camps?

EK: Not only in the camps. Where we (lived), we had camps. Where my mother lived, they had camps in the back (of her house).

HY: Do you remember some of the names of the other camps?

EK: No, I don't know.

HY: Did they have names?

EK: I don't think so. It's just camp back of so-and-so's house (HY laughs). But (the main camp was) Camp Tarawa.

HY: So, the smaller little camps, how many . . .

EK: Quite a bit. It's a big area. Yeah, about maybe, two-acre lots, or three-acre parcels, all these tents (were scattered all over the community).

HY: How many people would that accommodate?

EK: I don't know. Maybe, couple hundred. Yeah. Mm hmm. Down here---this big area (where

Camp Tarawa was), in the thousands. (The military) did their own cooking. So, there (were) slop---waste food that our local people went into business, and started raising pigs, because they got the slop from (their) kitchen.

HY: So, that military that would be camped, you know, behind the house, would they then---they would go back into Camp Tarawa [to cook]?

EK: No. They had their own kitchen, they had their own everything, mess hall.

HY: Meals, they had their own mess hall. I see.

EK: Mm hmm. They didn't have to go down here for their meals.

HY: How did your work at Mutual Telephone, did that continue, pretty much in the same way, or did it change after the military left?

EK: After the military, well, it became easier. There's no pressure, you know.

HY: Did they continue to monitor phone calls?

EK: No. After the war, no. After the military left the district, everything went back to normal. It was just during the war days, when everything was censored. I remember, I thought, (after one year of employment), I got two weeks vacation. I thought it was a big deal, you know (laughs). Went to Honolulu with my two (girls then), and I couldn't come back. I couldn't come home because transportation was limited, the plane was filled. (Travelers with priority were given the privilege.)

Come in. Is that your car? Come in! (Person enters the house.)

HY: Oh! It is! Oh, okay. Hi!

EK: Oh, come in. That's all right!

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

EK: See if you ask the question, it's easy for us to, you know, to talk about it. But otherwise, you don't know what to say. You know, it's hard.

HY: I wasn't aware that there were all those little camps . . .

EK: Mm hmm. Back of my mother's house. Back where we were, they (were) the ones that fix the tractors, the cars, the trucks. They took over one of the garage up there.

HY: Is that the . . .

EK: Mechanic's garage. And that's where the mechanic---all the trucks and stuff. Yeah.

HY: Was that just military vehicles?

- EK: Just military vehicles. So, the civilian who owned the garage was without a job because he had to. . . . They come, and just take over your . . .
- HY: Who was that?
- EK: Ryusaki. It was Ryusaki's Garage.
- HY: What was his first name?
- EK: Hiroshi. R-Y-U-S-A-K-I.
- HY: I think they mentioned him in the book, the Yutaka. [*Parker Ranch Paniolo Yutaka Kimura* profiles EK's brother-in-law.]
- EK: Oh, yeah.
- HY: So, what did he do then, after they took over his garage?
- EK: I don't know what he. . . . Oh, he went into the trucking business while they were using his garage. Actually, he's a mechanic.
- HY: The trucking business for Parker Ranch?
- EK: No, his own private, to hauling freight from Hilo to Waimea.
- HY: Oh, and then did he continue doing that after the war?
- EK: After the war, he continued doing that, and opened up his garage again. Mm hmm.
- HY: Is that still here?
- EK: Still there, but it's so dilapidated. No, I think it's closed now. Well, he put a new building, just adjoining (the old) one. And he's already retired, so Goodyear [Goodyear Tire Center] is leasing the place now.
- HY: One of the things that your husband mentioned was, talking about postwar, that the social activity really boomed then after the military left. Do you have any memories of that?
- EK: Oh, that's when everybody started enjoying life. I don't know.
- HY: What did you do?
- EK: (Laughs) Parties. Oh boy, because then we had a---the manager at the time, was really nice, you know. He's more into . . .
- HY: Was that Hartwell?
- EK: No, it wasn't Hartwell. Well, Mr. [Richard] Penhallow was one of the managers then. Hartwell was not the entertaining type. He never entertains his employees. But when Richard

Smart came back to live, (Richard) opened up his house to his employees. He had parties and invited different groups of the employees down to the house for parties. And then, (later on,) all these supervisory people would open up their homes, and have dinners, and social gathering, you know. It was so nice because we never even got to see the manager's house, or the owner's house until. . . . [Prior to that] only certain groups, you know, were invited to the homes for dinner, social activities.

HY: How would you characterize the difference between the management styles of the father [A. W.] and the son [Hartwell], the Carters?

EK: The Carters, well, Mr. Carter---A. W. was very strict for the good, you know. And people respected him for that. He was a father to the employees, and their families. And he just didn't want to see anything go wrong within the families. (Though) he was soft within himself, he was (a strict person). (However,) he was an easy man to talk to. He would give you a straight answer. You know, with Hartwell, he can never make up his own decision. He was so afraid to make a decision. I guess because his father was still living. I don't know. So, everything is referred back to the father. But between the two, A. W. is (a) much more respectable person.

HY: Do you think that was the general feeling of this community?

EK: At the time, yeah. Mm hmm. Everybody looked up to A. W., in fact the whole state. The whole state looked up to him. He had so much power (because he was an intelligent man).

HY: So, getting back to your social activities after the war . . .

EK: Oh, we organized a dance club in Waimea. And everybody took dancing lessons.

HY: What kind of dancing?

EK: Oh, social, ballroom dancing. We had an instructor from Hilo, comes out every weekend. And during the week, we still having a ball, because we go to different homes. We have to practice before the next lesson, or before the instructor comes out. So, we take turns at people's homes, and the women prepare desserts. That's where we got all our recipes, exchange recipes. So, had good fun, really good fun. Raising our (children), and still having a ball.

(Laughter)

HY: Okay, I think we're getting close to the end.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 22-100-2-93

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Elizabeth Kimura (EK)

August 14, 1993

Waimea, Hawai'i

BY: Holly Yamada (HY)

HY: This is a continuation of the Elizabeth Kimura interview, session two.

What do you think the community's response was when Hartwell [Carter] began taking over most of the managerial work?

EK: Well, first of all, this little community has been known as Parker Ranch. So everything that's done here or any kind of work, program, social activities is with Parker Ranch. So, with Mr. [A. W.] Carter, as far as I have known him, he's really a respected man by everybody in the state, and especially the employees. Employees really look up to him. Nobody dares argue with him or contradict him, or whatever, because what he says goes. Because at that time he was probably about—he came into the ranch as a lawyer. And when he took over the guardianship of the Parker [Ranch] estate, he was really not quite knowledgeable about cattle, but since he was brought into the ranch to manage the ranch, he learned a lot. He read books and he attended workshops or whatever. And because of his intelligence, he became a well-known cattleman, more than an attorney. But I guess the attorney [background] helped him a lot, you know. And he was firm in his decisions. He was somebody, when we see him coming, we're all scared. My father, he was scared of. . . . I don't think he was ever relaxed with him in their meetings because he doesn't know what's going to come out.

HY: Did A. W. ever socialize with other . . .

EK: No. Not with the employees. But he was the type that took care of the family. He really had a concern for the individuals and for each member of the family. He was always there when you needed help. He would never question you, "Why? Why do you need this? Why you need that?" But he would always come through with whatever. Well, the people of those days don't dare go into his office and say, "Oh, I want this, I want that." Because they probably know that because of his firmness, he stood firm, they just can't take advantage of him. Nobody dared, did that.

HY: Why do you think, even though people respected him, they feared him? Why is it they were afraid?

EK: I guess it's the way he holds himself. I mean, he really holds himself real (businesslike). And it shows his authority. I guess, well, we, people, we always look up to somebody like that. It's just like the schoolteachers those days. Our parents always felt the schoolteachers was



there (with some authority) and they were always right. They never doubted any. It's not like nowadays, the parents just feel that they're above the teachers. It's just, I guess, respect for those with authority or those with little bit more education.

HY: And then when Hartwell, he came on . . .

EK: Hartwell was really, he's a soft person. He didn't have his father's traits at all, no.

HY: So, he was less respected, would you say?

EK: (No,) I would (not) say (that).

HY: Did people fear him?

EK: No.

HY: No?

EK: Mm mm. [That's right.]

HY: And what about socializing? Did he [Hartwell Carter] socialize with you a little bit?

EK: No. Those days, (management hardly) socialize with the employees, except for when the ranch puts up a Christmas program for the families and a New Year's *lū'au* for families. That was the only time. There's no time for socializing. Everybody was so busy working, working.

HY: Would employees ever go to their homes?

EK: (Except for a few, we were) not invited.

HY: When Richard Smart came back . . .

EK: Then he broke the. . . .

HY: With that tradition.

EK: Yeah, mm hmm. He broke the tradition.

HY: Can you describe how that happened?

EK: (With his exposure in the Mainland for so long.) When he came back, (he would gather a few of the employees) at his home down at Pu'u'ōpelu . . .

HY: He invited the employees to his home?

EK: He invited the employees to his home for dinners. Not all, you know, a group at a time. And that was nice. And then Mr. [Richard] Penhallow was here, too. He opened up his house to the employees. But Hartwell (hardly) did. Probably just a certain group of people only, but not the employees as a whole.

HY: Did the community still respect Richard Smart and Penhallow . . .

EK: Penhallow was assistant manager for (about) twelve years, I'm not sure. [Richard Penhallow served as a general manager for only two years—1960–1962—but began working at Parker Ranch in 1947.] So when he (came to work for Parker Ranch, he was) respected. The people outside of Waimea did respect him, on the county level. And employees did look up to him.

HY: So would you say that their ability to open their doors socially to the Waimea community didn't undermine their authority?

EK: No, [it did not]. That was nice because they had nice wives. You know, these managers had beautiful wives, so they were really hospitable to the ranch employees' families, too.

HY: How would you characterize Richard Smart?

EK: Well, Richard was away for so long. When he finally came back, we were happy that he came back to at least oversee the ranch. And this was not until the [19]60s when he finally came back. Of course, we were kind of doubtful because we didn't think that he knew enough about ranching because he was more into acting and stage. But he was, as a whole, I think, a nice man and he took care of his employees and he improved the community. That's one thing he really did was provided different means for the community to enjoy. Like our shopping center, he started our shopping center [Parker Ranch Shopping Center]. He (built) the school gym, a library. I mean, there's lot of good deeds he did for the community as a whole. We kind of felt the county [County of Hawai'i] (could have assumed this responsibility). (The gym is a community facility, however, Parker School uses the facility for physical education. The [Thelma Parker School Public] Library is now designated as a Waimea school-community library.)

We never got all this recreational facilities or whatever from the county. It was from Mr. Smart. He would start the project and then probably turn it over to the county to upkeep it, you know. And he would provide lands for different uses. He wasn't a stingy man. Well, he had a little Hawaiian in him, so that part was good. He has, I don't know, maybe a quarter Hawaiian in him through his ancestors. So he did have that love for his people.

HY: Do you think the community now is happy with the trusteeship? I know there's this will dispute with his sons [Gillard Smart and Anthony Smart contested their father's will, and Gillard Smart brought a lawsuit against trustees Warren Gunderson, Richard Hendrick and Melvin Hewitt] . . .

EK: (Yes), there is this dispute. I guess it's not the community (who is reacting with the trusteeship). It's probably the employees, (who was accustomed with a management-type operation). That's the way I feel. Because the community doesn't know, except for a few people, of course.

HY: How do you think the employees feel about this trusteeship . . .

EK: Well, some of them are not happy with the selection of the trustees, you know. I don't know. I personally don't know them well enough. And then we've been out of the ranch for so long that we (are out of reach as to its operation). So I really don't know how it's going on. Except for the few who've been with the ranch up until Mr. Smart passed away are not happy

with the (new) organization.

HY: Were there people in the ranch that sided with the sons?

EK: (Yes), there are. There are people who are with the sons. And there are people who felt that (probably, they are) not capable enough to assume that role. (Gil Smart has had less experience on the ranch whereas, Tony [Anthony Smart] did work on the ranch and was well liked by the boys.)

HY: Just to backtrack a little, going back to wartime, I understand the courthouse, was that used for social activities?

EK: At one time, yeah, it was used for social activity. That's where we have all our—because that was the only building that was available for social activities. You know, meetings and dancing. They used to have dancing there.

HY: Did that happen during wartime?

EK: It was before the war.

HY: Before the war?

EK: Yeah. The courthouse was [used for social activities] before the war.

HY: Okay. And did it stop during the war or was. . . .

EK: No, it was functioning as a police department.

HY: Oh, okay. But it was no longer used as a social gathering place?

EK: No, it was no longer used as a. . . . It was way before the war started where it was---in the meantime we had built this Barbara Hall where the Parker School is now. That was built for social activities. And then, that [courthouse] building there was used by the police department and for court cases.

HY: And the Barbara Hall was renamed, is that right?

EK: It was renamed after Richard's [Richard Smart's] mother. Richard's mother, Kahilu [taken from the first three syllables of her Hawaiian name—Thelma Kahiluonāpuaapi'ilani Parker Smart]. It was named Kahilu Hall. And then, the Parker School took over, so now it's called the Parker School. And then, Richard built a new town hall in honor of his mother. Kahilu Town Hall and the Kahilu Theatre.

HY: Can you describe what it was like, social activity at Barbara's [Barbara] Hall?

EK: It was mostly (used) for ranch affairs, ranch functions. When we grew up, we're not able to throw a party or have a big function like we do now. Everybody just goes out and have a big *lū'au* or for a wedding or baptism. Those days, we didn't have such a thing. So the hall was strictly used for ranch functions. (It was not opened to the community.)

HY: What did it look like then?

EK: (The building, looks, remain the same.) It was smaller than what it is now. It was just a big hall and a back room and upstairs for movie projector. We used to have silent pictures those days. Once in a while, we had silent pictures (shown for ranch) families.

HY: You say this was only for the ranch employees?

EK: Employees.

HY: So if you weren't employed by the ranch, you weren't able to come and see movies?

EK: No, you weren't able to come. And the people respected that. They didn't take advantage of it, you know. That's where they had the Christmas-tree program and the big *lū'au* and silent movies. And meetings would be held, as long it's ranch-associated, like Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, you know, that are sponsored by the ranch. They would have first use of that facility. Otherwise, there was no other place to hold a meeting, except to go (to) the schools.

HY: What use did Barbara's [Barbara] Hall serve during the war?

EK: That's when the marines took over and they added on to the old Barbara Hall and made extensions more for gathering place. The boys would go there and play cards and have bingo games. Recreation . . .

HY: Was that only military?

EK: No. Our local people used to join in with them. And then they built the (movie) theater right next door to the hall. The military did that.

HY: What was the theater called?

EK: We used to call it Kahilu Theatre. And after the military left, (the theater was operated by a private individual).

HY: [Is this different than the Kahilu Theatre that Richard Smart built?]

EK: (Yes, this was a movie theater built by the military.)

HY: Private ownership?

EK: Private ownership, mm hmm.

HY: Was the theater for the whole community . . .

EK: For the community, mm hmm.

HY: It was built by the military, but everybody could watch movies.

EK: Mm hmm. Everybody came and watched movies. In fact, the war did a lot of good for Waimea. They brought in the theater, and brought in electricity, that's a big help.

HY: There was no electricity in Waimea prior to the war?

EK: No. Well, Parker Ranch had their own generator. So whatever functions was run by the generator (were for ranch activities). So most of the homes were all with kerosene lamps, kerosene stoves.

HY: What about the water supply during . . .

EK: Water supply, we had lot(s) of water. We didn't have too many people in the community. We didn't have the hotels. The farms were just limited. So we had lot(s) of water.

HY: And when the military came in, there was no problem?

EK: No problem. There was no problem.

HY: Did they build their own reservoir or . . .

EK: (I'm not sure.) The county (constructed a couple reservoirs for the community). Of course, Parker Ranch has their own reservoir up there, too. They pipe it down to all the different pastures on the ranch.

HY: Did the county build the new reservoir specifically because of the influx of more people . . .

EK: No. Oh, no, well, I wouldn't say influx of new people because we needed the reservoir for agricultural use. So that's when the state came in and put up a reservoir strictly for farmers.

HY: When was that? About when?

EK: Oh, that was about '65, between '65 and '70, yeah. Because since we have all this---open up more lands for Hawaiian Homes [State Department of Hawaiian Home Lands], these lands were leased by Parker Ranch for long-term lease until the lease expired. And that's when Hawaiian Homes took all the land back and awarded it to the Hawaiians. So it's just the farm lots that are using the state reservoir. The rest is all county water.

HY: You mentioned about doing laundry, helping your mother do laundry when the military was here for twenty-five cents for a pair of (khakis).

EK: A pair, yeah.

HY: . . . pants and shirt.

EK: Yeah, and that was all---that was my mother [Eliza Purdy Lindsey]. She took in laundry.

HY: When demand for laundry lessened after the military left, did some people still continue to set up business with laundry?

EK: No.

HY: Or did all of that just end?



- EK: It all stopped. Yeah, it just stopped. Of course, I think the military must have had their own Laundromat on base because the women here (didn't) do laundry for all of the boys. It's just limited. You could do just so much.
- HY: And so the social activity increased after they left.
- EK: After they left.
- HY: You got into doing all these dance parties.
- EK: Mm hmm. Lot of parties, lot of traveling to different areas, you know, get together. At that time we made lot of friends, too.
- HY: Was that throughout this . . .
- EK: Just this side of the island here. Yeah. Waimea, Honoka'a, Kohala. We even used to go to Kona.
- HY: And how long did that period of time last for?
- EK: Ah, let me see. Maybe five, seven years.
- HY: Why do you think there was all this activity suddenly?
- EK: Because we were young at that time, and we were in the mood, you know. So we had to do something. The menfolks was no problems because they always—like my husband, he would have his basketball team and baseball team. So he had his own activities, but we womenfolks were just staying home most of the time taking care of (children), and my position was going to work. So I didn't have no free time to really enjoy, except to go into church on Sundays, taking the children to Sunday school and stay back for church service. So this is. . . . Well, it was (an outing for me).
- HY: The Red Cross activities, did they stop?
- EK: They stopped, mm hmm, right after the war, yeah. Everything stopped.
- HY: What were some of the activities that the military had to do here while they were here? Was it just . . .
- EK: Oh, yeah. Lot of baseball, lot of boxing. We used to enjoy the boxing, yeah.
- HY: Why were they here for their military duties? Was this just an R and R [rest and recreation] place or . . .
- EK: Well, it seemed like it was an R and R. To some, it was an R and R. And the others, it's preparation, training, to go overseas. They did lot of training up at Pōhakuloa, down at the beach (on Parker Ranch lands), where they used to fire their artillery, whatever. And I think that's what it was.
- HY: Were there ever any injuries?

EK: Here? Not that I can recall. Oh, we had couple drownings down at Hāpuna Beach.

HY: What happened?

EK: They went swimming and I think probably two boys drowned down there because they were on the deeper side (of the beach). Because Hāpuna Beach is so long and they always say one section has a strong undertow and the other section towards Kona way is a better place to go and swim. I guess they didn't know (what area was dangerous). We even lost lives of our own community. We lost a little girl down there. The same area. And I think two soldiers, I'm sure, got caught (from) the undertow.

HY: Did they have to do any ordnance cleanup after they left?

EK: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. They kept the whole group back to go and scout all the grounds that they used for practicing to find all these dead duds. Some of them were not even dead because two of our ranch—one ranch employee got killed from the explosion while they were working.

HY: Was the employee helping them clean up or they were just . . .

EK: No, I don't think so. They were working down in the area and these boys found the duds. And they tried to collect it and bring it home. Something like that. And I don't know what happened. They threw it in the working truck and the dud must have hit the metal part of the truck and it exploded. So it killed one (instantly) and sent two to the hospital—major injuries. I think (one) died (later). The ranch had to have the military come back again and scout the whole area. Be sure there's no more duds left.

HY: What happened to the land where the military was?

EK: Oh, it's still Parker Ranch. It was loaned out, just loaned to them, yeah. I don't know . . .

HY: Was it used for anything after that?

EK: As pasture, (resuming normal activities).

HY: Pastureland?

EK: Mostly pasture. They were on pastureland most of the time.

HY: What about the military that was behind your, I guess, your mother's house?

EK: (Ranch lands were in the back of) my mother-in-law's house and my mother's house. So I guess the ranch offered them all this available space for them to camp. The ranch contributed a lot towards this military training. Because they even helped the military providing them meat. And the farmers were able to sell their vegetables. So, it benefited the community, too. The store, I understood, Hayashi Store, when the military boys came in, they just raided the store. What I mean "raided," they just went in and bought (all the khakis). Because their clothes, as I say, was wet, wet when they came. So they needed extra supply of clothing. So luckily, Hayashi Store had khaki pants and jeans. And the food, you know, they would just go in and buy and buy. They practically bought the store out. So that was the time when the

businesses were making money. Yeah. Through the military.

HY: You know, the socks and the scarves the first-aid people made . . .

EK: Ladies (in the community).

HY: . . . ladies made, did they sell them? Or did they donate it?

EK: No, it was donated. Mostly for hospital use. And well, some of them would go out in the wet section of the ranch (and) would have to be warmly clothed. So they needed all this extra clothing.

HY: You mentioned before that, after Mutual Telephone [Company], you began working for the doctor's office.

EK: Mm hmm.

HY: Why was it that you left Mutual Telephone and began working . . .

EK: No, we didn't leave Mutual. They gave priority because we were going automatic.

HY: What does that mean?

EK: (Communications were improved and progress was considered and automation took over.)  
(Thus the) dial phone (went into effect).

HY: Oh, I see.

EK: Yeah, the company did away with the manual type of. . . . You know, eliminate employees that way. We didn't need to have (the) switchboard. So what they did was, rather than putting us out of work, we were offered either to go to Hilo or to Honolulu and work on the switchboard. But (we were) all married and lived here, so we couldn't just leave the family and go. That was the conversion from the manual type of operation of the switchboard to the automatic. We knew it was coming because they were preparing for (it). Hilo was the only ones with dial phones. The country area all had switchboards.

HY: So what year was that?

EK: Nineteen fifty-seven. So after that, I did . . . (EK coughs.)

HY: Are you okay?

EK: I'm okay. This is normal with me.

HY: Take your time.

EK: After that, I did housework. I did housecleaning for some people. Then I went to work at the store, [The] Parker Ranch Store at the time (that was bought by Mr. and Mrs. Kenichi Hayashi). Couple years. Parker Ranch [then] decided that the doctor that they (hired) should service the community as a whole, rather than just ranch employees. And that's when the

doctor came to see me and asked if I was interested in working at the medical center [Parker Ranch Dispensary]. Take care books, receptionist, and (general office work).

HY: When you worked at the store, what were your duties there?

EK: Sales work, everything. Stocking the shelves, and filling gas in the cars. We had a gas station there, too, so we go out and put gas in the cars.

HY: Did that store accommodate the whole community?

EK: Community, mm hmm. We had other stores like Chock In Store, [I.] Oda Store, and Fukushima Store, but the ranch store was the bigger one with(in) the community.

HY: Were those stores seen as competitors?

EK: No, no. Funny, each store had its own customers. The surrounding neighborhood would patronize one store. It was very unusual. Because when I was married to (my husband), we moved (in) with his mother up the road. Oda Store was across, was on the opposite side of our house. Naturally, no car. We didn't have car to go just run up and down the road, so we just have to walk to one store, bought our supplies there.

HY: What kind of wages did you get working at Parker Ranch Store?

EK: Oh, let me see. Dollar quarter [\$1.25] (a day). Oh, was so cheap. Maybe dollar (a day). But still, that's kind of high, those days. (Five) dollars a (week). Nobody earn that kind of money. That's very, very cheap.

HY: Did other employees of the ranch have better wages after the war?

EK: (Yes, there was some increase in pay, however), it took quite a while before reorganization came in. As far as pay scale, and benefits, and having new people come in to manage. They made some changes, yeah.

HY: Who was responsible for the reorganization?

EK: (It was not till about 1969 when Mr. Smart brought in a group of consultants) [Rubel-Lent & Associates of Phoenix, Arizona] to (manage) the ranch. They made the changes. They saw what was wrong. It takes an outsider to see what's wrong. So they made lot of changes, which was (for) the better, for the best of the ranch. So that included promotions, and pay scale, better pay and better benefits. That's when we had HMSA [Hawai'i Medical Service Association]. Prior to that, the ranch took care of all medicals.

HY: Do you think people were happy about the change?

EK: I think so, yeah. They were happy that they were treated fairly. Actually, we didn't have any union here because we didn't need a union, too, because we felt the ranch was fair to all its employees.

HY: What about the housing?

- EK: Housing, you live in a ranch house. You don't pay anything. It's a free housing. Because we were in a ranch house before we built this house. So it's---you have a free house, free meat, free milk. And if you're a Hawaiian, you have poi. If you're a Japanese, you have rice. So a bag rice.
- HY: So you folks, you get both?
- EK: No, no poi. So we had free rice, milk, butter, beef. So that kind of makes up for it.
- HY: Did the housing quality change after the war?
- EK: When Richard [Smart] came back.
- HY: So it was in the sixties?
- EK: During the sixties when the quality of the house changed. The appearance and the renovation.
- HY: The house that you live in now, where we are right now, is this also provided for by Parker Ranch?
- EK: No. The only thing Parker Ranch provided here was, they opened up this subdivision for employees with twenty-five years of service who were given the priority to buy the land. They had the lots all cut up for employees with twenty-five years service.
- HY: So you bought this lot?
- EK: We bought this. And then we put up our own house.
- HY: And then you built on it?
- EK: Uh huh [yes].
- HY: I see.
- EK: But they gave it at a very, very reasonable price. So it was just like a giveaway.
- HY: And how long have you lived here?
- EK: Twenty-three years now.
- HY: Okay. Going back to after you worked at Parker Ranch Store, you started working at the medical center . . .
- EK: At the doctor's office.
- HY: Was it called Parker Ranch (Dispensary)?
- EK: Uh huh. It was still addressed Parker Ranch. Parker Ranch Dispensary, that's what I used to answer. Yeah, it was a nice doctor. And then when he came in, then we started servicing the community as a whole. Because you need to. Because when it's emergency like that, you



cannot turn anybody away. And that's when, I think, the Honoka'a Hospital came about, too. So our patients would go to Honoka'a for surgeries or care.

HY: So was the Honoka'a Hospital only a referral place or how was it associated with Parker Ranch?

EK: (It was a state hospital servicing the Hāmākua and South Kohala district.) If it was a serious case, he [the doctor] would refer you to Hilo or to Honolulu. And if it's a ranch employee, to go to Honolulu, you need a referral of a doctor. Because we need to let the office know. Because they would contribute to the expenses for the transportation and the hospital in Honolulu. Of course, the ranch has its own home nursing, I guess you would call. A home nurse, she would go around and check on all the patients, all the employees who's ill and make recommendations to the doctor or to the office.

HY: You remember who that was? The home nurse?

EK: Well, Louise Case.

HY: Louise Case?

EK: When I came in, it was she, Louise Case. Before that, our nurses worked with the doctor strictly for employees only.

HY: You remember what your wages were?

EK: I think I was doing pretty good. (This was in 1960 when I started off with \$150 a month. Before Dr. Eklund retired, probably a year before, I was earning \$350 a month.)

HY: And you were considered an employee of Parker Ranch then?

EK: No, no. I was employed by the doctor, even though we worked for the ranch. So he pays my salary.

HY: And was he paid by . . .

EK: The ranch. He's paid by the ranch. And the ranch provides the facilities, you know, the dispensary and the . . .

HY: Did the ranch also provide for medical supplies?

EK: Dr. [Raymond] Eklund would buy them, and then, yeah, it's charged to the ranch. Medical supplies.

HY: I think we're running out of tape again.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

HY: How long were you with . . .

EK: Dr. Eklund, before he retired, he moved back to the Mainland, was eight years. He finally decided that they're going to move back to the Mainland. In the meantime there was another doctor that was practicing in the community, so he took over the medical dispensary [Parker Ranch Dispensary]. Of course, then he brought in---his own secretary, and receptionist, and nurse. So that means we were out, you know.

HY: Oh, I see. What was his name?

EK: Dr. [Keith] Nesting.

HY: Nesting?

EK: Nesting, yeah.

HY: So after leaving the. . . .

EK: After leaving the medical center [Parker Ranch Dispensary], I went to the Mauna Loa Observatory---Mauna Loa [site of the] High Altitude Observatory. But we had our office down here in town. So I worked for---it's a federal-sponsored project. And we had scientists from the Mainland come down that would do the study of the clouds and the sun.

HY: What were your duties specifically?

EK: Oh, we did lot of graph work. I don't know, lot of paperwork. Get information prepared, ready, for the scientists to evaluate the weather conditions.

HY: Were you full time?

EK: No, part-time. Part-time, which was nice in a way. Because (I) needed to be home at the time, too, (to be with my children). All my (children attended the) Kamehameha Schools in Honolulu. They started from the seventh grade. So every (summer) they come back (for vacation) that means (lots of time put in to do) sewing new clothes. I used to do quite a bit of sewing. And those days was all this cancan slips and those full gathers at the waist, which was easy except to make the gathers. But preparation to get them back to school, it took lot of work, lot of time to get our (children) ready to get back to school.

HY: You ever sew as a business?

EK: No, no, no.

HY: Only for your. . . .

EK: Only for my children. Yeah. They didn't mind it, you know. I was pretty good. I think I was. Commercial patterns (were sold in the store). I would follow the commercial patterns. Simplicity [patterns], at the time. And then till my oldest daughter, she's a very---in fact when she went to school, she wanted to be a homemaking teacher. She did. The two girls went to school in Missouri after graduating from Kamehameha Schools. And her first teaching assignment was in Connecticut. My oldest one. And then she wanted to come home. So, she

taught at Kohala High School. Then went down to Honolulu, taught school down there. And then, finally back to Honoka'a. So she's been there (since).

HY: All of your children are professionals.

EK: (Laughs) Well, (each) in their line of work. And I'm so glad my girls know how to cook, my boys know how to cook. I mean, it's not like [points to her husband in the next room]. . . .

(Laughter)

HY: You taught your sons and your daughters how to cook?

EK: Well, because going to Kamehameha, it's a boarding school. You have to learn how to do your own laundry, take care your beds, and things like that. And then when they went to college, they have to manage by themselves and learn how to cook. They're real good cooks. Even James, my youngest one. When he was at Hilo college [University of Hawai'i at Hilo], they live in dorms, but still they have to provide their own meals. Larry is a very good cook. Lester is a good cook, too. They always like to try new recipes. And my girls are really good. So I always feel that their husbands are real fortunate. You don't find that anymore.

So, Leo does lot of sewing. During the summer, she's always busy getting clothes ready for school. I still have my old machine there since 1957.

HY: You ever use it anymore?

EK: I use it. I use it now more for hemming and alterations. My grandkids would come or my boys would come and tell me hem up their pants or, you know. I don't mind doing it.

HY: So when you were working part-time with the observatory [Mauna Loa Observatory] . . .

EK: Yeah, five years. And then I guess the federal government ran out of funds. They couldn't carry on the project so there I was, without a job again.

HY: Did they employ other people from Waimea?

EK: (Yes.) There were three of us in the office, local girls. And the scientists would come from the Mainland, two scientists from the Mainland.

HY: Did the scientists live in Waimea?

EK: They lived here, mm hmm.

HY: What were their names?

EK: One was Mr. Richard Hansen and his wife, Shirley. They both worked together in the same. . . . The other one was Charles Garcia.

HY: What kind of work were they doing there?

EK: They would go up and they have all these instruments up there in the observatory. And they

would look at the. . . . It's not quite like the—what's this now?—Canada-France [Canada-France-Hawai'i Telescope Corporation]. Almost. Well, Canada-France [observatory at Mauna Kea] is study of the stars and the moon. They were with the sun and the weather, the clouds. The formation of the clouds. They could tell you about the weather, what kind of weather we're going [to] have for the day.

HY: Was their work primarily research, do you think?

EK: Research, yeah. It's mostly like a research-type thing. Yeah. Because the home office was in Boulder, Colorado. So all the reports had to go back to them.

HY: Do you know what branch of the federal government it was? [The Mauna Loa Observatory is part of the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.]

EK: No. Something energy. I don't know. Oh, High Altitude—it was called the High Altitude Energy something, I forget. [The High Altitude Observatory at Mauna Loa was a section of NCAR, National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado.]

HY: So when they left then, you were out of a job again?

EK: Uh huh, mm hmm. (Laughs) That's why I was not a professional woman. Not in one particular field. But I was a professional woman in all areas of (laughs) employment that I (was employed). But I thought I was fortunate because I was able to (learn and do) all this new type of work I was doing.

After that---and then 1974, that's when I went down and worked at the Kawamata Farms [Inc.], the rose farm. It's just that I needed something to do. I wanted something to do. So whatever came along, I just grabbed it and made real useful out of it and proved to myself that I can do it, irregardless what kind of job it is.

HY: Did you start part-time or full-time?

EK: (I started off as a part-time for couple of years.)

HY: What do you do at Kawamata Farms?

EK: Well, at the time, (the Kawamatas) were raising carnations, (only) carnations. So it was just disbudding, and harvesting, and packing, and shipping. And at the same time, I was taking care of all the bills, send them out, deposits, and general office work. My job was in and out, in the office and out in the fields. And then we started planting roses, so it was the same thing, (gathering) the boys and the girls (to do planting), harvest the rose, grade, and bundle, shipping. I accepted that position like it was my own (farm), you know. The Kawamatas (had faith in me and depended) on me and thought I was reliable, so. (Laughs) I stayed with them for fourteen years, then I decided to retire when I was sixty-seven. Retired at sixty-seven. Two years at home and I went right back (to work) again.

HY: You got restless?

EK: Not restless. Well, I (guess I) did. If they hadn't called me back, I would have gone and seek

employment at the new shopping center that came in, KTA [KTA Super Stores] and at least do something. But then, luckily, when they called me, I thought, well, something that I (already) know. So it would be no big deal. I just fall right into it again.

HY: Why did they call you again after you retired?

EK: The turnover was too great. (Also, the present employee was due for maternity leave.) So Mr. [Raymond] Kawamata (phoned me and said,) "How about you coming back?"

I said, "Well, under my terms, though." I told him. (Laughs)

HY: Did you start part-time, this time?

EK: Yeah, this time, I'm part-time. But I think, eventually, looks like I'm going back full-time, I don't know.

(Laughter)

EK: Because the hours are getting longer now. I used to work maybe five hours a day. I go in at nine [o'clock]. I have two-hour lunch break. And then I quit at four [o'clock]. Which was good. Until now, the assistant manager to the manager left the company, (moved) back to the Mainland. He's from the Mainland, so he wanted to go home with his family.

HY: When did the farm start?

EK: The rose farm started in [19]74.

HY: So it started when you. . . .

EK: When I was there. Prior to that, they were in all vegetable crops. Tomatoes, greenhouse tomatoes, cucumber, bell pepper. And out in the fields would be cabbage, Chinese cabbage, lettuce, celery.

HY: Do you know why they started to go into the flowers?

EK: Well, Mr. [Naoji] Kawamata, the older of the Kawamatas, went to Maui for some kind of trip and visited (the) greenhouses, carnation farms, rose farms. They were backyard-type (farms). And he got interested in that. And the university-extension people [University of Hawai'i, Agricultural Extension Service] kind of encouraged him. They thought Waimea would be ideal for this type of flowers. So he gave up all his tomato planting and went into carnations first.

HY: Was he successful as a vegetable farmer as well?

EK: As well. And he was---prior to vegetable, being a farmer, he was a fisherman. He was a well-known commercial fisherman from Honolulu, from Hale'iwa. And they moved up here.

HY: When did they come here?

EK: Oh, I don't know when they came in. The [19]60s, I think. Mm hmm, yeah. So they moved



up here. Well, there was a girl that worked there. She and I were good friends. So she was employed at the farm. They needed a worker, so she asked me, "Oh, you want to come?" and I said, "Sure." I was without a job, anyway, at the time. So I went down. I was getting tired, but I'm not the type to give up, so I just (laughs) stayed on.

HY: What other current activities are you involved in?

EK: Oh, I think I'm slowing down in all my activities. I'm just concentrating on my work and now (whispers) my golf.

HY: You golf?

(Laughter)

EK: I was active in church work, too. Hisao and I were very active in church work. But sometimes you think it's time to retire from all these activities. Because we're old. I'm in my seventies, he's in his eighties. And there's all these young people coming up. I think they should be taking over. I'm (always) in the kitchen, and I miss all the activities that's going on in the church. I was strong—we both were strong with church work. Of course, we kind of relax now little bit. We're slowing down. Really, it's not that we don't want to get involved. It's just that we feel that we can't do anymore. When you come old you get little bit more frustrated if things don't go right. You get (tired physically). So it's best not to get involved.

And then he does his own planting. He has his own little greenhouse. So he keeps himself busy that way. Of course, he's active in the Lions Club. He's really active. I don't belong to any clubs because I can't find the time to go to. Sometimes they have their meetings during the daytime and I can't go. And in the evenings, once I come home, I don't want to get out. I just want to stay home.

HY: The greenhouse that he has now, is it just for his own personal . . .

EK: Personal. Just to keep him going.

HY: He enjoys that?

EK: Yeah, he enjoys doing it. He loves to putter around and experiment (on) new plants.

HY: You mentioned about your mother, how she was the one that did the finances in your family. And then you had said that you kept track of the books for Kawamata Farms.

EK: Yeah, I did.

HY: Are you financial planner at home as well?

EK: No, at home here? At my house? It's my husband.

HY: Oh, I see. Okay.

EK: (Chuckles) Yeah, I don't. He takes care. But at the farm, I take care all the books. I'm the only one that knows the financial standing of the farm. Income, expenses, and so forth. Yeah.

Do all the payroll. We have about thirty-two employees there now.

HY: What do you see as the future for Waimea? Where do you see it heading?

EK: I think there's a real potential growth here. As far as business, I don't know, except for the hotels. But the hotels, doesn't seem like they're doing too well. But we have so many small businesses right now in town and I don't think they're doing that well. My niece has an ice cream stand [Sugar and Spice] (at) the shopping center. I think she's just (about) making a go, enough to cover expense (and payroll). Until we have growth here and we have new. . . . I don't know, ranching alone is not enough. And farming, you can't depend on farmers, workers. You know, it's hard to find workers because they're all at the hotels. And the farmers right now, the only farmers that's farming are the father and their sons. And once the father goes, I don't think the sons are interested to keep up. It's hard work. Farming is real hard work. In fact, lot of the farmers down there have sold their farms and gone into. . . . Some of them are retiring from the income on the sale of the farms. So we might not have vegetables in the future, except from the Mainland.

HY: Is there anything you'd like to add, looking back? Especially during wartime, anything you'd like to add?

EK: (Pause) Well, I don't know. I've seen my children grow up and. . . . During the wartime, not much changes took place, except I would say we got to be a little more civilized. (Laughs) My only regret is—up till now—is that. . . . Well, I'm proud (of) my (children) because we were able to provide them with all the needs. And yet, sometimes when I look back, now that we don't have anybody to support, I wish I had what I'm getting now. I wish I'd had the money at that time. Because my girls struggled through high school. My (children) struggled. We couldn't even give them extra money for spending. Well, that's the way we were, too, when we went to school. We would save our lunch money for the end of the week to go shopping. Every Friday, (our matron at the boarding school) would take us into town for shopping, with twenty-five cents. That's all we (had for shopping). And the most we would buy is *crack seed*, at that time. Seeds, you know, Chinese [preserved] seeds. But now that we have grand(children), I can use it on my grand(children). When I look at Leo, and I look at Leila and Larry, oh, I just want to cry. Because I wish I had had money at the time to give them when they really needed it, when they really wanted it. But they had to go out and work on their own. And if five dollars a month I would send for spending money, that's not enough but that's all I could afford at the time. My mother, when I look back at my mother, my father died when she had about two or three more young (girls) in the family that never even got to high school yet. So she struggled. She struggled with ranch pension. But luckily at the time I was working, so Hisao and I were able to help (her) support the family. We really did help support our family. Yeah, mm hmm. With very small income, but we managed. But lot of sacrifices. Every time we had a car, it was a secondhand car. It was not a brand-new car. We couldn't afford it.

HY: Okay. Anything else?

EK: No. Just . . .

HY: Okay. Thank you very much. (EK laughs.) Go ahead.

EK: I'm happy for my family and all the blessings we've had up till now. If it wasn't for (our

faith in) church, I don't think we're able to carry on. That's why (we were) really involved (in) church work, especially Hisa. He was always a moderator, or chairman of this committee, chairman of that committee. He served on the (Hawai'i) Island Association on the state level, you know, as far as church work. And education is his top priority for his children. That's why he's always involved with the schools, PTA [Parent-Teacher Association]. And all functions of the school, he was involved.

HY: It seems like education was really emphasized. Emphasized and . . .

EK: Yeah. Because we couldn't get (to college). We wanted to. We wanted to have an education, but we couldn't (do it financially). But all we could see at the time was, "I want you to be a teacher," and "You be a dentist," or something, that was it. So when Larry (our third child) went into Hawaiian language, we thought, "Oh. . . . (HY laughs) What's that all about?" We wanted him to be a dentist or a doctor or something. But his mind was (set). He was interested---it was through the encouragement of his teachers at Kamehameha (Schools) and at the university [University of Hawai'i]. That's how he got into (the Hawaiian language)—and he's really, really (doing a) good (job). And he's single, so he's very independent. (Laughs) So when he said he's (majoring in the) Hawaiian language and the Hawaiian culture, (we supported him all the way). (Leonetta, our oldest, is in education—elementary vice principal at Honoka'a School; Leila, our second, is administrative assistant at the Lucy Henriques Medical Center; Lester is now bank manager at American Savings; and Kimo, our youngest, is back in college, third-year student majoring in chiropractor.)

And that's the thing now, you know. (The Hawaiian language.)

HY: Okay.

EK: You want this [microphone]?

HY: Thank you.

EK: Yeah. (Laughs)

END OF INTERVIEW

# **AN ERA OF CHANGE**

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### **Volume I**

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Social Science Research Institute  
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